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**Norms of Swahili Translations in Tanzania:
An Analysis of Selected Translated Prose**

By

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2011

DECLARATION FOR PhD THESIS

I have read and understood regulation 17.9 of the Regulations for students of the School of Oriental and African Studies concerning plagiarism. I undertake that all the material presented for examination is my own work and has not been written for me, in whole or in part, by any other person. I also undertake that any quotation or paraphrase from the published or unpublished work of another person has been duly acknowledged in the work which I present for examination.

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DEDICATION

*To my Life, my little Children,
Aaliyah, My first Love, my Constant, my Baby;
Aalim, the one whom the Heart remembers most for it had Loved best;
Aamal Hannah, My little bundle of Hope, my Soul!*

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To them all I say, *Asanteni*.

ABSTRACT

This study is about the Norms of Swahili translations as analysed through a selection of translated prose. The selection comprises *Alfu lela ulela* (*The thousand and one Nights*) and *Mabepari wa Venisi* which is a translation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. These two canonical Swahili translations have been done in conjunction with a more modern translation of Naguib Mahfouz's *The Search*, translated as *Msako* in Swahili. For comparative purposes a number of translated prose and some narratives that are part of Swahili children literature have been included.

I have set forth the argument that there are a number of Swahili translation norms operating within the polysystem. These norms have been influenced by a number of active agents including patronage and the interference of English which led to translation occupying a central position within the Swahili polysystem for a number of decades. This is why translation has been crucial in the formation of Swahili literature although this situation was reversed in the 1970s from whence translation has occupied a marginal position in Tanzania.

A number of translation strategies have also become the norm and these include appropriation, omission and the use of an unmistakable form of ideological and cultural manipulation. Similarly, there has been extensive use of situational equivalence where what is Swahili substitutes the foreign contexts. Nevertheless one of my arguments is that this trend is being re-defined. Despite the ambiguous status of some of these strategies, and their perceived marginalized position in the West, to the Swahili, these have been regarded and accepted as part of the entire Swahili translation system.

To a large extent, I have used a target oriented approach since the translations themselves have largely prioritized the target Swahili language and culture. The analysis has been undertaken through a comparative depiction of the processes and strategies that were undertaken by translators. This was done at a macro as well as micro level. At the macro level, I have examined the extra-textual materials in relation

to the socio-cultural and political context of Tanzania while at micro level I have investigated the textual sources which are the translations themselves.

The thesis concludes with the presentation of translation norms that range from the ready acceptance of indirect translations being embraced as Swahili literature to the practise of translator's self-commissioning. I have argued that factors that have led to the categorization of norms are often inter-dependent. I sought to categorise Swahili norms broadly into norms that *domesticate* and those that *foreignize* translation literature. The future of Swahili translations in Tanzania will emerge through the struggle between what is alien and what is familiar, which can also be portrayed as the global and the local.

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INTRODUCTION

Swahili language has evolved through half a millennium of rigorous social and economic activities all along the East African coast.¹ The Swahili people are culturally a multi ethnic group whose origin has been the centre of centuries old debates.² According to most missionaries, including Bishop Steere and Frederick Johnson,³ the Swahili originated from various Bantu ethnic groups who intermarried with foreigners, mostly Arab traders⁴ who also Islamized them. Other scholars including Reusch (1953) argue that the Swahili are a result of intermarriage between the local *Wangozi* who lived along the East African coast with the *Shirazi* who had invaded the coast from Persia. These were later trailed by a wave of immigrant traders from Arabia, Persia, India, China and other places who intermarried with the original inhabitants of the East African coast leading to the creation of the Swahili people. Both views converge on the idea that the Swahili are a coming together of Asiatic and African peoples with diverse cultures emanating through commerce. Mbaabu (1985) sums up the different arguments by advancing that the Swahili can be categorized into three groups. The first one comprises the original Wangozi, the second group is made up of mixed Arab and African ancestry and the last group is that of assimilated people who came to the coast from other African communities. Whatever theory one is inclined to adopt, the Swahili society is one that shows evidence of a coming together of cultures. The ‘...Bantu language belonging to the

¹ A detailed discussion has been undertaken in chapter one. Also See Knappert (1979).

² The word ‘Swahili’ is all embracing and includes the language itself (*Kiswahili*), the people (*Waswahili/Mswahili*), the geographical locality (*Uswahilini*) and also the traditional values (*Uswahili*). The term Mswahili may also imply a shrewd entrepreneur, while Uswahili may denote the culture of being shrewd (But we are not interested in this meaning at this time). For more on Swahili see Chiraghdin and Mathias Mnyampala (1977), Chittick and Rotberg (1975), Lodhi (1979), Steere (1870) and Whiteley (1969).

³ They were also Swahili scholars in the 19th Century.

⁴ For more on the trade that took place see Mazrui and Mazrui, *Swahili state and society: the political economy of an African language*, London:James Currey, 1995.

north-eastern branch of the Bantu family languages' (Lodhi, 1979:23), with its large influence from Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Portuguese and many other languages gives an image of a 'rainbow coalition' that would be fertile land for translation to flourish. Through the existence of Islamic cities and the flourishing of cultural centers along the East coast of Africa, one observes that both Arabic and Bantu languages have been 'instrumental in the formation of Swahili' (Mazrui and Sheriff, 1994:67).

Accounts of the lives of the Swahili⁵ especially of the reigning dynasties are recounted in the Swahili chronicles. There are various chronicles including that of Pate, Zanj, Mombasa and Lamu; 'the earliest is thought to be *kitab as-Salwa fi Akhbar Kilwa*' (Rollins, 1983:29). This is the chronicle of Kilwa, the city that was believed to be the central hub of the Swahili since the arrival of the Shirazi. The scope of this chronicle stretches from the 10th to the 16th Century, accounting for all the dynasties that reigned in the area. What is interesting to this study is the fact that 'some of these were actually written in Arabic and then translated into Swahili; others, like the *Mombasa Chronicle* were written in Swahili and then translated into Arabic' (ibid, 30). Given the socio linguistic milieu, it is thus to be expected that translation has played a vital role in the political, social, economic and cultural growth and development of the Swahili language.

Through this study, I came to realise that the above mentioned assumption is relevant since Swahili has accommodated translation for centuries. Initially it played an inter-mediatory role as a language for oral interpretation practised by characters such as the interpreter, *Mtapta*, during trade and commerce as well as in colonial courts.⁶ It went on to become a central component and indispensable in literary

⁵Swahili language is also diverse with a multitude of dialects found in different localities of the East African coast. They are differentiated in vocabulary and pronunciation; these include Kiunguja, Kimvita, Kiamu, Kipate, Kipemba, Kimtang'ata, Kivumba, Kingazija, Kitumbatu and many others, See Rollins (1983).

⁶ See chapter one, 'Translation during the colonial period' for more on the role of the *Mtapta*.

exchange, occupying a central position in the Swahili polysystem.⁷ At its inception, this Swahili literary system was receptive of the ‘new’ foreign elements that were to form the Swahili translated prose subsystem. This prompted Ohly (1981:16) to point out that, ‘from the beginning, translations introduced most of the genres,’ including biographies, travel stories or adventures and novels. Translation was used in educating the colonized and in moulding them. In turn, this centrality meant that it played an active role in determining the parameters of the Swahili literary polysystem.

After independence in Tanzania, Swahili was made the national language, making the state announce that translation from foreign languages was crucial and essential.⁸ One of the most important arguments presented in this study is the fact that translations actively participated in the shaping of the Swahili literary polysystem by influencing writers and shaping the literary output. In this respect, translations became the leading factor in the formation of new literatures. Through translations, there has been an assimilation of Oriental and Western classics such as *The Arabian Nights* (1885 – 1886) known as *Alfu lela ulela* (1929, 1974, 2004) Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (1596 - 1598), translated as *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) and *Cinderella* adapted as *Sinderela* (2003). This in itself is proof of the adoption and synthesising that has been the backdrop of Swahili translation. This study strongly argues that, initially, not only was Tanzanian literature essentially canonical foreign translated works which informed and influenced Swahili writers and later on influenced the trend and choice of what was translated, but also that translations were

⁷The polysystem is conceived as a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate or system of systems which interact to bring about an ongoing, dynamic process of evolution. It is therefore a translation phenomena that sees translation as a system that is hierarchized and heterogenous. This term was introduced by the Israeli translation scholar Itamar Even-Zohar who developed this idea in the 1970s. The main idea of polysystem theory is that semiotic phenomena, described as ‘sign-governed human patterns of communication’ should not be analysed in terms of their material substance but on the basis of relations. Literature is one of these semiotic phenomena, but in fact all parts of society can be called complexes of communication patterns i.e ‘systems’ (Even-Zohar, 2009). For more see Even-Zohar, 1990 and Toury 1995.

⁸ See chapter one, ‘Language and Translation Policy in Tanzania’.

actually assimilated in the very concept and identity of Swahili literature. This argument is supported by Mazrui (2007:127), who discusses Swahili translations and argues that ‘some of these translation texts eventually came to be included in the very definition of Swahili literature’.

It is worth noting that, despite the rich literary merit and heritage that is carried by Swahili language, only a limited amount of prose, specifically modern prose has been translated from this language. Most translated works have been done into Swahili from foreign languages. This discrepancy poses a crucial question regarding the position and future of the Swahili polysystem in general and Swahili translations in particular. This is particularly relevant since, initially, Swahili literature was essentially a body of translated prose. In the case of Tanzania, this extended to the period after independence where there was a vision that deemed it essential for everything of relevance in the hegemony was to be translated into Swahili. During this epoch, several foreign works were translated into Swahili for local readership. We now know that due to various reasons, including financial and political factors, that vision did not proceed beyond the 1970s.⁹ Ohly (1981:16) gives credit to this period claiming that ‘in the seventies translations lost their pure didactic aims and became part of normal dissemination of Afro-English literature as well as world literature’. This claim is relevant since translations of the works of African writers such as Okot P’Bitek’s *Song of Lawino* (1966), translated as *Wimbo wa Lawino* (1975) by Paul Sozigwa and works of African authors such as Chinua Achebe, Miriama Ba, Ferdinand Oyono, Ayi Kwei Armah and Ngugi wa Thiong’o among others were translated and printed in great numbers.

Nevertheless, the above mentioned vision and the translation trend that followed it did not have the opportunity to flourish.¹⁰ This means that the status of

⁹ See chapter one, ‘translation during the post-colonial period’ and chapter five.

¹⁰ See chapter one.

Swahili translation and the role and effect of the strategies and approaches employed by translators and how these are reflected are of great importance to one who wishes to understand Swahili in terms of the status and translation trends as well as Tanzanian Swahili literature in general. This work examines this issue.

One of the key questions that have been posed by scholars analysing translations of African literature from and into other languages is whether a language can express what is alien to it. Studying translation in a post-colonial francophone context, Gyasi's (2006:3) question of whether or not a foreign language is 'capable of translating in an entirely satisfactory manner an imagination that has its roots in an alien culture,' is still pertinent today. Although the latter refers to the European portrayal of the African, an African portrayal of the West is similarly applicable as is an African portrayal of another African experience. Consequently a number of questions need to be addressed: Was the 1970s vision too grand to materialize particularly for a newly independent nation? Can the form and content of African works written in English be carried across into Swahili? Can Swahili convey the meaning and form that Shakespeare or Chaucer does in English? Can translations of translations, also known as indirect translations, such as *Msako* (2004), translated from the English translation of Naguib Mahfoudh's Arabic novel, *Al Tariq* (1964), *The Search* (1991), and *The Arabian Nights* (1885-86)¹¹ translated into Swahili from Burton's English translation, carry the original message intended by the authors? Are the specific original themes and structures used by the source language authors precisely communicated in translations? These and several others are the pertinent problems addressed in this work.

At the onset it seems that this 'carrying across' of the original messages has pre-occupied Swahili critics for a long time. For instance, the credibility of the

¹¹ This study will use Richard Burton's translation *A Thousand Nights and a Night* (1885) when referring to these widely translated tales. This is because the work is believed to be the source text used by Swahili translators. It will be referred to as *The Nights* in this study.

Swahili translation of Shakespeare's work by Nyerere, who was one of the most respected and authoritative Pan-African leaders has been brought into question by various critics including Mbaabu (1985). The kind of criticism aimed at this work is often along the lines of the following critique:

...The English line 'pray to the gods to intermit the plague' is translated as *kuiomba miungu iliahirishie janga*. Here Nyerere has translated word for word. The word 'intermit' may mean 'to suspend' or 'to discontinue' but the Kiswahili word – '*ahirisha*' implies 'to put off' for a while or simply 'to postpone'. A more correct word would be '*kuondoa*', 'to get rid of' since one does not pray for one's miseries to be postponed or suspended but to be done away with (Mbaabu 1985:118).

Mbaabu (1985) disagrees with what he considers Nyerere's wrong choice of words and his comments are typical of the kind of criticism often aimed at translations. It is common for scholars to conclude that certain translations are 'wrong' or 'unfaithful' because they find that the message that has been brought across is 'incorrect'. The fact that the task of translating is extremely demanding and with each translation, translators make different choices is disregarded. Rarely considered are the facts that these choices may be directed at bringing forward certain stylistic structures or even different contexts that the translators are working on. Interestingly, research into translation has shown that the translator's choices are the result of the given translator's socialization¹² and often, they are also the result of the translator's need to have their product accepted in the target culture.

We find that critics such as Mbaabu (1985) for instance, pick on words such as 'wenches', which Nyerere translates as *hayawani* and then argue that wenches are women seen more as sexual objects whereas *hayawani*, meaning 'mad person,' has the additional connotation of 'beast'. Based on that, Nyerere's choice is dismissed as incorrect. Similar to other instances, Nyerere could have coined a more acceptable term that would have been considered as 'the equivalent' by critics such as Mbaabu.

¹² Toury (1995).

For instance had he chosen words such as *binti* which means a young girl, or even *bibie*, which is slightly more archaic and carries with it a notion of status and prestige, qualities one does not associate with a wench, in my opinion, Mbaabu might have accepted them as equivalents of a wench. Similarly, had Nyerere wanted to bring across crudeness and immorality that is sometimes associated with the term wench, he could have used the word *malaya* which also means ‘prostitute’, although this term is derogatory in Swahili culture. As a product of his society, Nyerere adhered to certain societal norms while translating. These norms are understood to dictate personal as well as environmental values of what is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. In this case, Nyerere’s socialization prompted him to refer to a wench as ‘a mad person’.

In this instance, should a translator’s choices be examined from a different angle considering that translation is a decision making process? It would appear that one can move away from prescriptive criticisms that offer the ‘correct’ words for each given translation, and can then take on board the fact that translator’s choices are conscious decisions which can be analysed with the view of understanding our societies.

Critics of Swahili translations have been vocal enough to prompt some translators into a defensive position. We find for instance, in his ‘introduction’ to *Mfalme Edipode* (1971), Mushi writes:

Kutafsiri si kazi rahisi; na hakika, tafsiri yoyote, hata ile inayokaribiana na kilele cha ukamilifu, huwa na dosari ya namna Fulani. Dosari hiyo, aghalabu, hutokana na ama kuongezeka kitu asichokusudia mtungaji au kupunguza kitu alichokusidia (Mushi, 1971: viii - ix).

Translation is not an easy task; and surely, any translation, even the most faithful, has to have some kind of fault. This fault is derived from adding what was not intended by the creator or losing what was intended.

Mushi (1971) reminds his audience that in translation there are some kind of ‘faults’, *dosari*, that are evident in the end product, the translation, and that these are a result of either adding or omitting from the creator’s intentions. Mushi in particular, tends

to defend his stance in all his introductions. However how one perceives loss or gain as a fault is an issue for debate. This is simply because the two concepts are inevitably part and parcel of the act of translation. Since no two languages are similar, nor do they represent the same reality, shifts and differences between languages and cultures are inevitable. The translated piece cannot be categorised as faulty because a well thought ‘decision’ has been made. This decision making process is of central interest in this study.

So why do Swahili translators choose certain words over others? Why do they choose to translate certain texts and not others? What guides them in their translation? Do they follow certain translation strategies? What is the role of the audience, patronage, state ideology and the society as a whole with regard to the choices undertaken by translators, and how do these inform the decision making process? By answering these questions, we will be able to move away from the criticisms that have for centuries relegated and stamped translations into right or wrong,¹³ such as has been done by Mbaabu (1985) above, and advance into understanding translation as it functions in the specific case of the Tanzanian Swahili culture. In turn, this may lead into the flourishing of the vision that was brought unto its knees in the 1970s.

So as to understand Swahili translations in Tanzania, we have to be aware that, as products of given historical moments, translations reflect the culture, values and hierarchy of both the active players in its production and consumers of the final product. This is considered in the following quote:

Cultural formation mediates every stage of the translation process, from the choice of a foreign text to the invention of discursive strategies to the reception of the translated text by particular audiences. Thus, literary translators are often led to favour certain foreign texts and genres by prevailing literary trends’ (Venuti, 2004:34).

¹³ See Nida, Eugene (1964:159) who advocated fluency in his dynamic equivalence which is the naturalness of expression.

In our quest to understand the trends that characterize and determine translations in the Swahili polysystem, it has been essential to use a target oriented approach which investigates the ‘nature of the target text’ (Shuttleworth, 2001:178). This means that the translated Swahili text is analysed descriptively rather than prescriptively. A prescriptive oriented approach seeks an ideal notion of equivalence which means that the nature of equivalence between the source and target texts takes centre stage. The kind of equivalence achieved by translators is reflected in the product since ‘features are retained and reconstructed in target material, not because they are important in any *inherent sense* but because they are *assigned* importance, from the recipient vantage point’ (Toury, 1995:12). On the other hand, a descriptive approach extends beyond the traditional linguistic and language comparisons by incorporating social and cultural perspectives.¹⁴

‘Equivalence’ can be understood as ‘the relationship between a source text (ST) and a target text (TT) that allows the TT to be considered as a translation of the ST in the first place’ (Kenny, 2001:77). For years, equivalence has been a central concept in translation where translations have been judged based on the level of equivalence that had been achieved in a given work.¹⁵ It was expected that equivalence was attained when an exact relationship was achieved between the ST and TT. This definition has led to controversy by raising questions such as those pondered by Gyasi (2006:10): what constitutes equivalence? How is it determined? Similarly, equivalence ‘was unable to account for the style of the message which is just as important as the message itself’ (ibid, 11). Thus equivalence had to be relegated from its central position where it connoted naturalness and faithfulness. One can now try to understand the *kind of* equivalence that has been achieved by the different translators rather than dwell on idealized connotations. This has given room

¹⁴ See chapter two for an in-depth theoretical analysis.

¹⁵ See Catford (1965), Nida and Taber (1969).

for a study such as this one which tries to unravel the reasons behind the different levels of equivalence and how these are approached and achieved. Therefore, by understanding translation's decision making process, we will be able to understand not only the reasons that made translators such as Nyerere translate 'wench' as '*hayawani*', or, the reasons behind the existence of texts in certain ways and not others, but also the socio-political and cultural phenomenon that shape up the translations in the Swahili culture.

Another important question that will be looked at concerns the factors that characterize and determine translations. These are the extra textual issues and include the translator's whole process of socialization, his ideologies and beliefs and without doubt, the issue of patronage. Patronage is concerned with the role of the state and publisher's efforts in regards to how literary canons inform what is published. This is expected to offer an understanding of the criteria for translation. In the same breath, for instance, a question arises as to whether publisher's choices converge or diverge with foreign publishing, and the criteria to publish certain translations and not others. Does stereotyping and works fitting the West's expectations play a role with the Swahili translation? What about the Swahili expectations?¹⁶

Since no study has so far been done on Swahili norms of translation in Tanzania, this thesis will contribute towards academic scholarships on translation in the domain of Swahili literature. Findings should shed light on the trends of Swahili translation in different epochs; the choice of foreign works into Swahili and the strategies employed by translators. Further, this study will inform the translation of future works into Swahili language and contribute to the advancement and establishment of tools employed in translating foreign works into Swahili.

¹⁶ See chapter three for more on publishing in Tanzania.

Thus through the analysis of the given choice of translations in this study, it will be possible to determine the historical, social and cultural aspects that have influenced Swahili translations. These influences will be visible through the choices taken by the translators which are determined by norms. To understand translation, it is important to review the fact that ‘translation as an act and as an event is characterized by variability; it is historically, socially and culturally determined, in short, norm – governed’ (Toury, 1998:01). Norms are:

the translation of general values or ideas shared by a group – as to what is conventionally right and wrong, adequate and inadequate- into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden, as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioural dimension (the famous ‘square of *normativity*’ (Toury, 1998:07).

In other words, these are the general values and ideas that are the unformulated ‘instructions’.¹⁷ Norms function as models for behaviour producing expectations and assumptions about what is correct and they regulate all kinds of behaviour. According to Schäffner (1999), norms are developed in the process of socialisation during which they become shared knowledge in a community. They can take the form of taboo themes in the official discourse or can be in the form of preferred topics or preferred strategies of translation. In some cases, especially where the state has central control, these norms can be issued by the state as guidelines for certain aesthetic models to be followed. For instance, my research has led me to believe that the topics of choice during the 60s and 70s were largely aligned on ideals of socialism and nationalism. Therefore, the translation of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* (1945) by Kawegere Fortunatus was immediately rejected by the state. The book’s portrayal of class and status disparities among those who live communally did not please the then President Nyerere who aspired for the allegory of the Bolshevik revolutionaries. This was specifically so as Fortunatus, a native of Bukoba, was

¹⁷ For more on Norms see Hermans (1999), Schäffner (1999) and Toury (1998).

warning his people on how a society's ideologies can be manipulated and twisted by those in positions of social and political power. Fortunatus had to go to Kenya to have his translation published as *Shamba la Wanyama* (1967). And even after it was published, the book was banned in Tanzania. This is in accordance with the generally agreed notion that norms are understood to follow readers' or target society's expectations. This presupposes that translators are subject to expectations prevailing in a certain community at a certain time. Ideological, economical and power relations within and between cultures often act as the norm authorities, setting up conventions. Since norms change over time, they offer explanations as to why translations exist the way that they do.

Since this study focuses on Tanzanian Swahili translations, it attempts to examine such rules and norms and how they are sanctioned. According to Toury (1995:56-59), there are three levels of norms: initial norms, operational norms and preliminary norms. Initial norms determine whether a translation is adequate or acceptable; this is in turn determined by operational norms which are the textual features.¹⁸ The textual features in the case of this study are the translations which have been selected largely due to their position in the Swahili polysystem. These include tales from *The Nights*, some of which had circulated in oral form prior to being translated during the colonial period.¹⁹ It has since then enjoyed wide circulation through its various editions and reprints and has been central in the shaping of the Tanzanian Swahili literary scene. The tales have recently been re-translated, subsequently making the work of primal value in discerning norms of translation. There is a gap of approximately seventy five years between the initial translation and this recent one. An analysis of the different choices made by the different translators and their ways of tackling shifts between and within the

¹⁸ These will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

¹⁹ See chapter four for an in-depth analysis of translation in the colonial period.

translations should be extremely beneficial towards understanding norms of Swahili translations. Another translation that is tackled in this study is *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) which is the Swahili translation of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. This is the work of an English canonical writer that was initially translated into Swahili during the colonial period. The latter copy is no longer in circulation and has completely disappeared. The main reason for this disappearance is that it was solely produced to be used in schools for a short period during the colonial era. It was never reprinted.²⁰ What is available is the post-colonial translation by Nyerere, who was the first president of Tanzania and the founder of the *Ujamaa* ideology which has shaped Tanzanian literature for decades. My last choice is *Msako* (2004), a recent translation with all the trappings of modern society. It is a novel about Saber, a young man whose mother is imprisoned and whose 'dirty' money is confiscated. His mother dies soon after his release. Although he has been raised by his mother for a better life, the only future he could imagine is to become a ruffian or a pimp. Enveloped by solitude and loneliness he sets off to search for his father in what is actually a search for the self. This modern translation should provide norms that reflect the remodelled and globalized Tanzanian Swahili society.²¹ Apart from these three translations, this study also examines some translated children literature. The selected translation works make up the case studies for this research and these should be pivotal in determining operational norms. The findings from these translations in conjunction with the extra-textual²² sources should help us determine the norms of Swahili translations.

In this study, both Swahili and English languages have been used to conduct the research, especially the interviews and some written sources. Although English still retains its significant role as an academic language in post-colonial East Africa,

²⁰ Interview with Prof Mulokozi, 1st July 2004.

²¹ More on the reasons for the choice of these works will be discussed in chapter three (methodology).

²² Interviews with translators, assessment of their choices, ideas from respondents and various forms of documentation.

Swahili remains an important day to day vernacular language in commercial, political, cultural, and social life of the region at every level of the society. This is especially true in Tanzania, where Swahili is the national language used throughout the country in government offices, the courts, schools and mass media. It is precisely for this reason that Swahili was predominantly employed throughout this research.

The first chapter of this study concentrates on Swahili literary translation and brings into focus the language and translation policies in Tanzania. The theoretical framework and Literature Review are dealt with in chapter two. Special emphasis is given to Descriptive Translation Studies and the Polysystem theory together with the concept of Norms in translation. Chapter three is concerned with the methodology and analysis of data. Chapter four is devoted to the translation of *Alfu lela ulela* as it was undertaken by Brenn and Johnson and recently by Adam; chapter five examines the translation of *Mapebari wa Venisi* (1969) as translated by Nyerere, while chapter six deals primarily with the translation of *Msako* (2004). In fact the main corpus of the study is offered in these three later chapters where the choices and stances taken by different Tanzanian Swahili prose translators are analysed. It also includes a selection of children's literature since the latter forms a large percentage of the current literary output in Tanzania. The different case studies from various translations have been situated through pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods and offer a critical comparative study and commentary of the relevant literary translations. Chapter seven offers a conclusion to the study.

1. CHAPTER ONE

Situating Swahili Literary Translation

1.1 Translation during the Pre-Colonial Period

Swahili translated literature ‘derived its inspiration from Islam’ (Bandia, 2001:296) and was therefore initiated through the spread and adoption of this religion which reached the East African coast as early as the 8th Century (Horton and Middleton, 2000:49). One finds that during the pre-colonial period, literature was predominantly religious and poetic in form. Poetry existed in the verse as well as the prose forms.¹ This is evidenced in the existence of the oldest known surviving Swahili documents. One such document which dates from the early 1700s is the *Hamziyya*,² a long praise poem or *kasida* that narrates the story of the life of the prophet Muhammad. It was composed in Egypt in the 13th Century and was translated into Swahili in 1652. Knappert (1979), a renowned Swahili scholar who undertook the task of translating the first part of the *Hamziyya* points out that, following ‘the advent of Islam, Swahili was enriched with thousands of Arabic words, which were fitted into the Bantu system of noun classes and verb categories’ (Knappert, 1979: xvii). The result of this ‘was a totally new linguistic structure that evolved along its own lines and blossomed forth into a wealth of forms...’ (ibid).

Initially, most written works were transcriptions of Swahili epic poetry.³ These accompanied the messages from the Qu’ran which were interpreted orally to the Swahili people who memorized them in their original Arabic language. Later, the *Utenzi* (*Utendi*), a literature based on the narratives of the Qu’ran and legends about the prophet which drew upon conventions of both Arab verse and Bantu song, were undertaken either as adaptations

¹ For more see Knappaert (1979).

² The first known Swahili translation which was translated by Sayyid Aidarus bin Athman Al Sheikh Ali.

³ The advent of Islam had a similar influence for many Islamized West African societies such as the Fulani and the Hausa. For more see Niane (1960).

or imitations. The *Utenzi* would normally be a ‘long narrative poem which commonly dealt with the wars of the faithful, the lives of saints or heroes, in short the subject matter of an epic literature’ (Whiteley, 1969:18). Parallel to the *Utenzi* were the *Kasida*, which are praise songs to the prophet Muhammad. The fact that these documents were written in an Arabic script⁴ is a reflection of the influence of Islamic culture on Swahili society. Similarly, the translation of the *Hamziyya* among other works demonstrates that Islam has played a vital role in the development of Swahili during the pre-colonial period. Discussing the role of the poem Wa Mutiso (2005) writes that:

‘kasida hii pia hukaririwa wakati wa sherehe za maulidi, katika Afrika Mashariki, na hata katika nchi zingine za kiislam’ (Wa Mutiso, 2005:5).

Gloss: this *kasida* is memorized during the *maulid* celebrations in East Africa and in other Islamic countries.

Wa Mutiso (2005) adds that the memorized version is not only sung in celebration of the birth of the prophet but also during weddings when the groom is being escorted to his bride. Its importance to the Swahili people is especially linked to the fact that it praises the prophet Muhammad. According to Wa Mutiso (2005), when the work came to be written down, it was done in the *Kingozi* dialect of Swahili using the Arabic script. When translating it, Aidarus, the translator, transcribed rather than translated most of the terminologies of Islamic origin. Thus in one example it reads as follows:

Latin script transcription: *Naanza kwa jinale Bismillahi lenye adhama*
 Na ar-Rahamani Muwawazi na ar-Rahima
 (Wa Mutiso, 2005:29).

Modern Swahili: *Naanza kwa jina lake Mwenyezi Mungu lenye utukufu*
 Na mwenye kuwarehemu Mwenye huruma na mwenye rehema
 (ibid).

⁴ This script was later replaced by the Roman-based alphabet. According to Lodhi (2000), the script replacement was first undertaken by the first German missionary, Ludwig Krapf in the 1850’s. The latter started with the Kimvita dialect and by the turn of the century, grammars, dictionary and copies of the bible were done in the Roman script. Whiteley pays homage to the missionary by noting that, ‘to the missionary J.L. Krapf we owe the first systematic grammar of the language (1850) and this was followed thirty years later by his monumental dictionary (1882), (Whiteley, 1969:13).

This type of transcription was a wide spread practice by the Swahili. The process is acknowledged as a ‘word-for-word reproduction of part of the text in the original language, usually accompanied by a literal translation’ (Bastin, 2001:7). This translation practice was the preferred trend during the pre-colonial period, most probably due to the fact that translations undertaken were of religious texts and therefore regarded as sacred. Among those who used this strategy are the various *Masharifu* (generally accepted as descendants of the prophet Muhammad) and Swahili writers such as Sayyid Abdallah bin Ali Nasir who wrote *Al-Inkishafi* and Sayyid Manswab (Wa Mutiso, 2005:29). The latter were mostly descendants of scholars and merchants who had come from Hadhramaut in Yemen and were interested in spreading Islam in East Africa. Discussing the *Hamziyya*, Wa Mutiso (ibid: 1) points out that it is:

...*kasida ngumu sana kueleweka kwa sababu fauka ya kutumiwa kwa Kiswahili cha zamani zaidi, kuna dhana za kisufii ambazo ni ngumu kueleweka, miundo ya kisarufi ya Kiarabu na maneno mengi ya Kiarabu ambayo yametoholewa badala ya kutafsiriwa.*

Gloss:... a very difficult *kasida* (praise song to prophet Muhammad) to understand because apart from using archaic Swahili, there are some concepts of Sufism which are difficult to comprehend, the grammatical structure is Arabic and most of the vocabulary is Arabic words which have been modified/adapted instead of being translated.

It is this Arabic vocabulary and the modification of these foreign terms that have made some critics evaluate this work as an adaptation rather than a translation.⁵ Aidarus did a word for word rendering and preserved some Arabic terminologies in their original form. This was not done randomly but was specifically targeted at the words which he considered to have a direct link to Islam and Sufism. These are words such as *Bismillahi*, *ar-Rahamani*, *ar-Rahima* (ibid, 29).

⁵ See Wa Mutiso (2005).

Building upon the above, it is not by chance that *Hamziyya* and *Al inkishafi* were preserved but rather this is the result of their supposed religious significance. Through the preservation of some Arabism, the texts were regarded as sacred. Thus,

while the poems of Liyongo are much older than the Swahili version of the *Hamziyya* and were probably written down long before the 17th century, only the Islamic ones such as the *Hamziyya* were approved of and preserved while secular poems of Fumo Liyongo and his contemporaries were either suppressed or allowed to perish' (Amidu, 1990:4).

With the proliferation of Swahili translations, this translation strategy seems to have battled the winds of time and it can be argued that this trend has become a norm when translating Islamic religious texts. Thus, we find for instance Farsy's translation of the Qu'ran has employed this strategy as have many other religious translators.

Apart from the religious texts, Rollins (1983) explains that 'on the East African littoral at this point in Swahili literary history, there was to be found...stories, in both oral and written, in both Swahili and Arabic' (Rollins, 1983:70). There were also religious biographies as well as 'many stories, (*visa*) from *Alf Layla wa-Layla* like the well known '*Kisa cha mfalme wa visiwa vyeusi*' (ibid). This is reiterated by Mazrui and Sheriff (1994:93) who argue that:

...creative writing in Swahili...was overwhelmingly biased towards poetry, and that 'religious' poetry always had a chance of being preserved in the written form than did composition of more profane kinds. Until a few decades ago Swahili prose remained essentially oral. Some of these narratives had local origins; both Swahili and non Swahili (e.g. Somali, Boni, Pokomo, Mjikenda and Zaramo) while some others were local adaptations of otherwise non local (especially Arabian and Persian) extractions.

The interest of this research is in the foreign literature that found its way to East Africa, specifically to Tanzania. Swahili is one of the few African languages with a pre-colonial written tradition. According to Whiteley (1969), virtually all pre-colonial literature seems to have been written in the Northern dialects of Kiamu and Kipate which according to the latter gives evidence to the fact that literature 'disseminated southwards from a single centre in northern Kenya' (Whiteley, 1969:24). The trend changed with the arrival of Europeans when

the Swahili dialect of Zanzibar Town, Kiunguja, spread to the interior of East and Central Africa through trade links and eventually, British authorities made it the basis for Standard Swahili.

One of the respondents whose contribution to this study has been extremely valuable is Maalim Idris Saleh,⁶ proprietor of a small museum known as the Zanzibar Islamic Heritage at Shangani, Zanzibar Stone Town. He informed me that in East Africa, Islam spread through trade and it was a coastal urban phenomenon for a long time before it spread to the interior. In Tanzania, the regions that became highly Islamized include Tabora and Kigoma. We therefore find that, mosques which were the centre of communal life along the East African coast, were not simply places of worship but also for the urban communal development. They have therefore played a crucial role in the Swahili intellectual and political development. One such mosque in Zanzibar is *Msikiti Barza* located at Stone Town in Zanzibar. The mosque was very famous because, although it was located in Stone Town, the more affluent area of Zanzibar, it was along the border with *ng'ambo* which is where the less affluent people lived. It was therefore accessible to all and a number of intellectuals point to this mosque as the base of their knowledge. One such scholar is Sheikh Abdullah Saleh Farsi who translated *Qur'an Takatifu*, which literally translates as 'the glorious Qur'an'.

The *Barza* mosque offered practical Islamic knowledge to the Swahili and we find that, for instance, during the fasting period of 1944,⁷ Sheikh Farsi gave a *darsa* or taught the *Jalalayn tafseer* which is an important Qur'anic interpretation and translation for the Sunni Muslims. Linked to this, I discovered that various important institutions sprung from this mosque. There was the *Madrassa* that taught children Qur'anic recitations and *tajweed*. The *darsa*, which is generally 'a lesson' on Islam and there was also the *barza*, an institution that popularized various forms of literature, foreign as well as domestic.

⁶ Interviewed at the Zanzibar Islamic heritage in Shangani, Zanzibar, 21st July 2004.

⁷ See <http://sekenke.com/bodi/showthread.php?t=21244>

The *barza*, also spelt - *baraza*, is actually an elevated sitting area built of cement outside Swahili homes or mosques. It has been a popular Swahili architecture for centuries. Traditionally, returning from the mosque or their daily activities, men would sit outside on the *barza* before going indoors. It has been the focal point of Swahili life where for generations people came into contact with each other. The *barza* is therefore a place where people would meet to converse and thus pass on dogma. It should be noted that, although it is largely men who use the *barza* more than women, women would hear everything that was discussed and pass it on to each other.⁸

Borrowing from the concept of coming together on an elevated veranda outside Swahili homes or the mosque, a group of Swahili intellectuals established their own *barza*. This was a study group of intellectuals who read and translated impromptu for their brethren. In this respect, they popularized foreign tales. Their coming together often took place after the evening, *Isha* prayer and they often congregated on the long *barza* outside the *Barza* Mosque. According to Maalim Idris, among the most popular tales recounted on the *barza* was '*Kisa cha mfalme wa visiwa vyeusi*'⁹ which became part of household treasures. Initially these would not be considered Swahili literature simply because they sounded foreign, but with time, several tales became domesticated and internalized and were regarded as part of the local folk tales with varied versions that were adapted, imitated and corrupted to suit local audiences. Examples of this are the tales of Abunuwas which were later circulated as Swahili tales of *Hekaya za Abunuwasi* (1935).¹⁰

Linked to the idea of the *barza* we find that, having caught on the importance of this concept amongst the Swahili, the colonial Administration introduced a series of religious booklets entitled *Barazani*, which means 'upon the barza'. In 1910 *Barazani* 'sold 11,000 copies, evidence for the existence of some kind of reading public' (Whiteley, 1969:60). The

⁸ My late grandmother, Salama Rubeya, recounted many tales that she had heard through her window.

⁹ Interestingly, this is also reiterated by Rollins (1983:70). Also see above.

¹⁰ See chapter four for an in-depth discussion of Abunuwas.

title links the booklets to the idea of a fountain of ideas; and interestingly, the *barza* has continued to play the same role even today in Swahili communities where it is the hub of communal life.

In brief, it is evident that translation has had an important position in Swahili literature and the pre-colonial period witnessed Swahili language as the vehicle of some forms of literature such as folktales and songs that were recited in different religious and social occasions. The arrival of Islam juxtaposed the interaction between culture and literature where the Qu'ran became the first valued written work in Swahili society. Among the Swahili who valued the Qu'ran, there developed the need for reading and in due course, for writing. Thus, although initially Swahili did not have a written tradition, local intellectuals sprouted during this period and started writing by translating. They developed translation skills as the region was in contact with the outside world which allowed penetration of foreign literature, especially oriental literatures.

1.2 Translation during the Colonial Period

The initial presence of translation in the colonial period is witnessed through the role of interpreters, '*mtapta*'. This was the translator who mediated between the colonizers and the colonized and was in some cases seen as a treacherous¹¹ figure, rarely judged by the quality of his translations, especially by the colonized. No doubt, he was indispensable to the conquerors and in colonial Tanzania, during the German period, there is mention of a certain 'Selemani bin Mwenye Chande...one of Velten's chief informants when he was official interpreter to the Governor of German East Africa' (Rollins, 1983:50) which questions the role of translators by placing them on the same level as informants. This echoes the role of the translator in history, for instance the Mexican translator, *Malinche*, was seen as a traitor

¹¹ Interview with Dr Georgios Hadjivayanis, Rome, 6th March 2008.

and was despised by her people.¹² She was given a ‘contemptuous nickname, *la Chingada*, ‘the fucked’ (Robinson, 1997: 11) for being in the awkward position, at the middle of power politics: a multilingual among monolinguals. This raises important questions about the role of translators, ‘what power do translators and interpreters have in the political realm? And how is that power complicated by factors like membership in a despised gender, race or class?’(ibid). Unfortunately, there is no ‘equivalent’ of the Malinche in Swahili history although her role as a traitor is duplicated through the *Mtapta*. Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that the *mtapta* was also very important and often highly regarded by the locals. One such interpreter in history is the *Kadhi*¹³ of Kilwa, Mohamed Bin Abdulrahman Hamdani who was also a court interpreter and spoke fluent German, English, Arabic and Gujarat. Mohamed Hamdani was the only source of correct communication between his people and the colonial administration and in my interview with Salha Hamdani, his daughter; she informed me that her late mother, Salama binti Rubeya, had often talked of murder cases and cases of espionage where their father had saved a number of men who were falsely accused.¹⁴

The *Mtapta* represented the colonial Master when Swahili city states were being divided into different spheres of European influence which then amalgamated into larger colonial units. He is the person who informed the people who their new masters were as northern cities including Brava, Kismayu and Mogadishu - *Muyi wa mwisho* which means last town,¹⁵ became parts of Somalia and were under Italian rule. Mombasa and Lamu were ‘scrambled’ by the British as part of Kenya. In the current Tanzania, Zanzibar went under the

¹² According to Robinson (1998), she was the translator and mistress of the Spanish conquistador, Hernan Cortes, and in the year 1519, in a town called Cholula, she overheard that the native Mexicans were going to ambush the small conquering Spanish army. She reported this fact to Cortes who then entrapped and slaughtered three thousand native men from the town. The native King, shocked that his plot had been undone believed that the conqueror was the reincarnation of one of their gods, Quetzalcoatl. The role played by *Malinche*, the translator is obvious.

¹³ Islamic magistrate.

¹⁴ This study has depended on interviews as a research method because of the lack of written sources in regards to translation. This is discussed in chapter three.

¹⁵ See Al-Ismaily (1999).

British rule whereas Kilwa changed hands from the German to the British. The Comoros on the other hand became ‘assimilated’ by the French. ‘The history of translation in Africa during this period is closely linked to the policies adopted by the European colonial administrations’ (Bandia, 2001:298). Whereas the French advocated assimilation, the British instituted indirect rule which was fertile ground for interpreters. The effect on literature and translation was that ‘while the English allowed for some kind of development in indigenous African languages leading to the earlier indigenization of the Anglophone text, the French policy of assimilation tended to hinder the development of local languages in the French colonies’ (Gyasi, 2006:3). The Swahili speaking area of Tanzania was thence inadvertently influenced by the British policies where ‘vernacular education was encouraged’ (Bandia, 2001:298). Thus one finds that there are a number of translations that were undertaken into Swahili, as were a number of text books produced in Swahili. The task of translating was undertaken by ‘colonial masters’ who needless to say, needed the *Mtapta*’s knowhow during their undertaking of the task of translating. I would hereby advance that, although Brenn, a Swahili native and co-translator of a number of Swahili translations, was not officially a *mtapta*, nevertheless, the fact that he seems to have translated a number of works alongside British translators means that he did undertake the role of the interpreter. The colonial administrators such as Johnson needed and also depended on his knowhow for their products.

The translations produced were disseminated as part of the colonial administrative effort towards the fast development of Swahili literature. This included the formation in 1930 of the British colonial Inter-Territorial Language Committee, later named East African Swahili Committee. One of the roles of this committee was ‘making arrangements for translating into Swahili of the textbooks and books of a general nature selected, or for direct authorship in Swahili of such books’ (Whiteley, 1969:83), and also examining and correcting the Swahili language used in these books. The committee achieved a number of its targets

including the growth and development of Swahili scholars, that is the Swahili native intellectuals. These were partly influenced by foreign literature and were vital in the dissemination of oral versions of works that trace their origins in merchants and dissidents.¹⁶ Therefore, works including *The Thousand and One Nights* and *Aesop's fable*, have played important roles in the formation of Swahili literature and provided them with modes of expressions.¹⁷

In Zanzibar, this culminated in the establishment of centres of Islamic learning; the most famous being the Muslim Academy at Forodhani and the Masjid al Barza or the Barza Mosque. These produced high calibre Swahili scholars including Mwinyi Baraka and Abdallah Farsy.¹⁸ Since these literary centres were formed around families of the educated nobility and prominent poets, we find that, it is through these scholars that the missionaries and explorers were initiated into Swahili literature.

In the colonial Deutsche Ostafrika or German East Africa which is the current Tanzania, Swahili was used as the medium of instruction in schools. Schools had a three tiered system of education. During the first three years, students were taught reading, writing and arithmetic. An additional two years offered vocational training whereas one high school built in Tanga offered clerical, industrial and teacher training as well as some academic courses that aimed at producing clerks, tax collectors, interpreters, artisans and craftsmen among other vocations.¹⁹

This means that, during colonialism, interpretation preceded translation since it is Christian missionaries such as Edward Steere in Zanzibar who endeavoured to take the initial European oriented steps towards translation. The Missionaries' work generally comprised of

¹⁶ In *History of the Arabs* (1937) Hitti convincingly argues that many Islamic factional fighting in the Middle East led dissidents to migrate to the East coast of Africa, particularly to Zanzibar.

¹⁷ The most popular tale was 'The fox and the grapes' where the fox was adapted into the hare.

¹⁸ See above.

¹⁹ For more see: <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1516/Tanzania-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html> Tanzania - Educational System—overview

the translation of religious texts such as sections of the bible and later of the entire Bible. For instance, in 1847 Krapf published the Swahili translation of the third chapter from Genesis and in 1868 Streere published the Swahili translation of the Gospel of Matthew (Mulokozi, 2003:128). Rollins (1983) discusses this outpouring of religious materials for evangelical purposes and Mazrui (2007) echoes this by noting that missionaries,

rendered various sections of the bible into the language using the Latin script... (and they are also) responsible for exposing the West to Swahili literature by making its folktales available both in writing and in translation in European languages. They introduced the West to Swahili land by having some English texts translated into Swahili' (Mazrui, 2007:24).

When the missionaries translated, they used the latin script as opposed to the Arabic script that had been used traditionally. Therefore, we find that, at its inception, the Latin script was linked to Christian influence, an influence that stretched into the works of the 20th century Swahili poets such as Shaaban Robert and Mathias Mnyampala. Mnyampala recycled Christian themes and imagery which were built on lessons in morality. This is not surprising since formal education has its source in mission schools. It is interesting to note that both their works also portray an Islamic influence, showing the fusion that has taken place. The writings of Shaaban Robert in particular touch on traditional institutions and issues of morality having themes such as marriage and humanity. This is manifested in his *Adili na Nduguze* among his many other works. Similarly Mnyampala²⁰ composed poems that dwelt on the same themes manifesting conservative views. At the brink of independence, he wrote a gospel, *Utenzi wa Enjili Takatifu* (1963).

Through the missionaries, classical works of Swahili literature were translated into English. The criteria for the choice of the Swahili classics, *Johari*, among the few selected works translated from Swahili is pivotal in discerning norms of Swahili translations during

²⁰ According to conversations with Dr Georgios Hadjivayanis (PhD), an anthropologist, Mathias Mnyampala, a primary court magistrate was a devoted catholic and his mentor was a famous poet and teacher at the Dodoma Muslim School, Mahmoud Hamdoun (Jitukali). Dr Hadjivayanis was born in 1945 in Dodoma and knew both men personally. – Interviewed in Rome, 6th March 2008.

the colonial era. The fact that only some selected Swahili works were being translated into English raises the issue of criteria for such choices. Although most of these translations were for academic purposes, it is still noteworthy to ponder on the reasons for choosing some works for translations and not others. Throughout the history of the colonized, the trend has been for the hegemony to choose materials that reflected a stereotype of the colonized.²¹ In the case of Swahili, we find that the translated literature included Swahili chronicles which offer a historical view of the Swahili. These were most probably of great interest to the colonial administration and indispensable in their quest towards an understanding their subjects. A classical example is the Chronicle of Lamu ‘written by the chronicler Shaibu Faraji bin Hamed al-Bakariy al-Lamuy at the request of the Wali of Lamu, Abdallah bin Hamed in 1897 which was edited and translated by William Hitchens in Bantu Studies, Vol XII of 1938’ (Rollins, 1983:39). These Swahili classics were entitled ‘*Johari za Kiswahili*’ and were perceived as works that shed light on the pre-colonial Swahili society.

The patronage, which at the time was the East African Swahili Committee, gives its reasons for their choices, advancing that it was interested ‘in discovering, translating, editing and, with the approval of the owners, publishing Swahili manuscripts of literary or/and historical value (which) may not be so widely known’ (Bull in Allen, 1955:3). Thus, the post-marked Swahili classics were those that were judged to have a historical and literary value. The literary value was handed out by Western scholars such as Stigand who, according to Hitchens (1972:9), based on their own aesthetic value judgement, were able to write ‘a great if not the greatest religious classic of the race,’ as did W.E. Taylor upon translating *Al-Inkishafi* into English. This value judgement is without doubt a point for contention, especially today. This is simply because, as a direct result of colonization, it has been the case that ‘European norms have dominated literary production, and those norms have ensured that

²¹ See Bassnett and Trivedi (1999) and Robinson (1997).

only certain kinds of text, those that will not prove alien to the receiving culture, come to be translated' (Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999:5).

In actual fact, the concept of 'classics' is foreign to the Swahili; this has implications on the supposed '*johari*' which can be perceived as products of a colonial endeavour to post-mark and initiate a genesis of the Swahili language and literature. One can then question whether the colonial machine was laying the foundation which in the final analysis commercialized Swahili as a language, culture and people; integrating it into the market economy. This is resonated in Allen (1955) when he points out that these classics also had an added advantage of being translations that 'have, almost without exception, sold well' (Bull *in* Allen, 1955:3).

In Swahili speaking East Africa, the colonial state and especially the Christian missionaries, propagated Western oriented education. English literature was introduced and a number of translations were done. During the colonial period of Deutsche Ostafrika and later of British East Africa, missionaries and colonial authorities took measures to build a standard form, *Kiswahili Sanifu*. The Kiunguja dialect was chosen in this endeavour. 'After World War I, the British felt the need for a standard variant of the language to be used in administration and education in their East African territories' (Lodhi, 2000:34). Thus, complementary to this development, there was compilation and publishing of dictionaries and books of standard Swahili. The books being published were of an educational nature. This included translations of European classics. Thus we find that some translators including A.C. Murison and Werner 'translated fragments of texts by Dante, Socrates and Augustine, and treated their work as an introduction to European culture for Swahili speakers' (Ohly, 1981:4). Other translations were those of Boileau by J.W. Murison. These translations were especially the efforts of the colonial state. Mazrui (2007:124) confirms that 'these translations, it appears, were intended to fill gaps in Swahili readers for schools and perhaps

provide models that would encourage East African nationals to write prose fiction along similar lines'; which they did. Similarly, the Swahili works which were aimed at schools were greatly influenced by foreign works of literature. For instance, *Safari ya Bulicheka na mke wake* (The travels of Bulicheka and his wife)²² starts off as Wyss' *The Swiss family Robinson* (1812) with Bulicheka and his wife, Lizabeta, setting off for their travels before their ship is wrecked and they find themselves in a lone island where they build a tree house and hunt for a living. Soon enough, a savage King dressed as a native African disturbs this peaceful life. Bulicheka fights him and becomes the King of the savages – the *wagagagigikoko* (a humorous name that would make any child laugh) before going off to rule over them in their land. This part reminds one of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1835) and probably a number of other tales that would certainly displease many post-colonial theorists and 'Africanists' to say the least. The last section of the story has Bulicheka saving a child from fire, as *Sindbad the Sailor* from *The Nights* would have done before setting off on a long journey where he finds someone very similar to Robinson Crusoe called Mzee Miraji. Together they come across vast amount of wealth before he is able to return to his original life – as a teacher. Apart from Bulicheka's travels, one finds for instance, the Swahili book for class 4 in the colonial lower primary school contains tales such as *hadithi ya kishwira*, 'the tale of Kishwira', which is very similar to many tales in *The Nights*, the only difference being Kishwira is a Princess from Pate (an island off the Kenyan coast) who falls ill after eating fruits that were not ripe. Her father, the Sultan of Pate is helped out by a pastor to restore her health.

The prose translated during this heyday of the colonial efforts to develop Swahili literature includes Rider Haggard's *King Solomon Mines* (1885) into *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929) and Allan Quaterman (1885), the hero from the Solomon mines, *Alice's*

²² Year of publication not available; nevertheless, this book was used part of the colonial education syllabus for those in lower primary school.

Adventures in Wonderland (1865) by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, commonly referred to as *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) translated as *Elisi katika Nchi ya Ajabu* (1940), Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) translated as *Robinson Kruso* (1929) Kipling's *Mowgli stories* (1894) translated as *Hadithi za Maugli* (1929) R.L Stevens *Treasure Island* (1883) translated as *Kisiwa chenye Hazina* (1929) , Swifts *Gullivers Travels* (1726) translated as *Safari za Gulliver* (1932), Bunyan's *pilgrim's progress* (1678) translated in 1927 into *Safari ya Msafiri* (1927). Others include Steere's *Hadithi za Kiingereza* (1867) and *Mambo na Hadithi* (1884) which are adaptations of English stories, Kingsley's *Mashujaa, Hadithi za Wayonani* (1889) which are adapted Greek tragedies and *Hadithi za Esopo* (1889) which are adaptations of Aesop's Fables. As for translations from other foreign languages, I am aware of two works, Voltaire's *Zadig* (1747), translated by a certain Abdulla M Abubakar in Zanzibar. Also Shaaban Robert translated some of Voltaire's stanzas, he also translated a collection of poems, *Rubaiyat*, by the Persian mathematician and astronomer Omar Khayyám (1048 – 1123) via the English translation by Edward Fitzgerald. It would have been interesting to study the Swahili translations especially since, according to Bassnett and Trivedi (1999), Fitzgerald accused the Persians of artistic incompetence and suggested that their poetry became art only when translated into English. However, this study is interested in tangible translation texts that can be studied comparatively. The absence of copies of the given translations would have meant that I would have needed to rely on fragments from various critics.

The body of work that is available in Swahili seems to have been undertaken in abridged editions; adapted for new readers of the language. The works were translated into Swahili for public schools where a younger African generation could access them. According to Harries (1970) it is because the intended audience was the young generation that very little attempt was made to edit the material. The fact that, for example, as Harries,

(1970:29) points out; in England at the time, stories such as *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and *Gulliver's travels* (1735) were considered to have 'deeper level of allusions and interpretations for the adult reader to discover and enjoy' was therefore not taken into consideration.

However, it needs to be pointed out that financial constraints do tend to play an important role in the execution of this trend, as does time. It cannot be a coincidence that Frederick Johnson, who has a proliferation of Swahili translations under his belt and Samuel Mushi who has also translated extensively, both held important government positions aimed at the development of Swahili. Johnson was the first secretary of the Inter-Territorial Committee, a body that was set up for supervising standardization and dissemination of Swahili literature during the British colonial period.²³ He also established the preparation of *Madan's Swahili – English Dictionary*. In the post-colonial period, Samuel Mushi was appointed 'Promoter for Swahili' (Whiteley, 1969:104) from March 1965 to June 1967²⁴ and according to Whiteley (1969), this appointment was motivated due to the fact that a number of plans to develop Swahili language were shelved for lack of funds. In a seminar on African culture, Mr Mushi presented a paper on the role of the Ministry of Culture in national development. In that paper, it is obvious that his views echo those of Johnsons. Both strived to have Swahili as the main medium of communication, standardizing its orthography and widening its grammatical usage by the public (ibid).

Although working during different epochs, as it will be seen in the course of this study, both Mushi and Johnson have used omission extensively. I would argue that in their quest to disseminate the language, they wanted to make available a large amount of texts for the public; texts written in standard Swahili, which would also be interesting to the public at large. Thus they might have produced hurried translations since that was the quickest and

²³ See above.

²⁴ Mushi writes about this appointment in the Introduction to his translation *Mfalme Edipode*, (1971).

easiest option. In fact, Mushi (1971) echoes Harries' (1970) argument when he points out that the task of translation is not easy and it is a fact that translators tend to '*kuchukua njia ya mkato ili kuepukana na taabu*' (Mushi, 1971:ix) which means 'use short cuts so as to avoid problems'. Despite the abridging and usage of short cuts, in the final analysis, it cannot be argued that Mushi and Johnson played an important role in the dissemination of written Swahili translations. In fact, in one way or another, both of them were pivotal in making omission a norm in Swahili translation.²⁵

The missionaries also translated books of their taste, mostly with moral lessons for the schools. A good example of this is *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1883) by Carlo Collodi. Nevertheless, their main interest lay in translating the Bible into Swahili and all the principal ethnic languages such as Kinyamwezi, Kigogo, Kihaya etc. The first translation of the Qu'ran into Swahili was also translated by a Christian Missionary named G. Dale in 1923. However, those undertaken by Ahmadi in 1953 and A. S. al Farsy's in 1969 are among the popularized versions of the Qu'ran.

Hence, 'proper' Swahili translation, in the modern sense, can be said to have emerged during this period of intense missionary activity. Interestingly, it is only a handful of incomplete translations, such as Voltaire's which were undertaken by the Swahili themselves and then rendered into English. The post-colonial theoretical argument that 'translation was for centuries a one way process with texts being translated *into* European languages for European consumption, rather than as part of a reciprocal process of exchange' (Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999:5) does not really hold in the case of Swahili. In this case, it was largely European classics that were rendered into Swahili for the consumption of the colonized. The possible reasons for this will be discussed in Chapter Four.

²⁵ See chapter four and five respectively.

It should however be pointed out that there is one Swahili translation that was undertaken by a 'native' so to speak, and this is the translation of *Riwaya ya Bwana Myombekere na bibi Bugonoka Ntulanalwo na Bulihwali*. The novel was initially written in the Kikerewe dialect of northern Tanzania in 1945 by Aniceti Kitereza. Aniceti Kitereza, a teacher and translator (of evangelical texts), was born in 1896 could not find a publisher for his work. According to Masoko,

Inafahamika kuwa idadi ya Wakerewe wakati huo ilikuwa ndogo. Pia ni watu wachache sana wa Ukerewe waliojua kusoma na kuandika. Msimamo w akikoloni kuhusu lugha za kienyeji ulikuwa hasi. Walipenda kuzitumia kwa maslahi yao na si kwa ajili ya kuziendeleza (Masoko, 1996:69).

It is recognized that the number of Kerewe people at that time was small. Also, among the Kerewe, it is only a small number that was literate and so able to read and write. The colonial policy in regards to local dialects / native languages was ... They preferred to use them for their own benefit and not to develop them.

The missionaries who used Kitereza's skills to translate the Bible into Kikerewe informed him that the book contained a number of 'uncouth' concepts that they could not publish (ibid). Aniceti Kitereza was then advised by his friends to translate his novel into Swahili so as to access a wider audience. Kitereza started translating his work after independence in 1968 and although it only took him a year to finish translating it, it was only published in 1975 by Tanzania Publishing House, a few days after his death. The length of time it took for this work to be published may be one of the reasons for the lack of written prose works in local dialects that have been translated into Swahili.

1.3 Translation during the Post-Colonial Period

The Post-colonial period opened up with the euphoria of decolonization of Zanzibar and Tanganyika. Similar to other independent nations, Tanzania, which is the union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika, sought to affirm its independence; an independence that was galvanized by an *Ujamaa* oriented ideological euphoria which gave hope to the oppressed. *Ujamaa* was

founded on a need to build institutions and values which would adhere to ‘the same socialist attitude of mind which in the tribal days gave to every individual the security that comes of belonging to a widely extended family’ (Nyerere 1962:7). Nyerere’s vision was to connect socialism with African communal living. Like many African leaders of his time, Nyerere wanted to break away from the colonial ruling tradition which was Capitalism. Hence *Ujamaa* was twofold; firstly, it was a means through which decolonization and African consciousness would take place and then would be replaced by the ideas of *Ujamaa* and secondly, the system of *Ujamaa* would enable the state to take hold of the national economy for the interest of the people. According to its founder,

The first priority of production must be the manufacture and distribution of such goods as will allow every member of the society to have sufficient food, clothing and shelter, to sustain a decent life. ... Apart from these basic needs of man, a socialist society would put much emphasis on the production of socially advantageous goods. It would concentrate on better educational facilities, medical care, places of community activity like libraries, community centres and parks (Nyerere, 1968:11).

Various methods were used to inculcate this ideology. For instance, Kivukoni and government officials who had to undergo ideological education. Also every region had a zonal ideological college linked to the Kivukoni College in Dar es Salaam. These colleges trained the grassroots party and government leadership. They were supposed to guide the masses. The concept was to transform people’s economic and cultural attitudes whereby they would live in communal settings, work for the group and to a smaller extent for themselves as individuals and also learn to be self reliant while disengaging themselves from Western ties and ideologies. It was formalized in the 1967 Arusha Declaration where *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* (socialism and self-reliance) concepts became the social and economic policies of the country.

Blommaert (1996) discusses the extent to which *Ujamaa* provided an overall orientation for literary practice in Tanzania.²⁶ Blommaert (1996) argues that *Ujamaa* structured literature by determining the relevant topics of literary discussion and debate and also influence criteria of quality in assessing literary products. He also adds that it came to be used as a default mode for discussing social themes in literature. To implement *Ujamaa*, various methods were used including making Tanzania a one party state, introducing the *Ujamaa* villages and implementing free and compulsory education for all. To sensitize the people, literature in Swahili, the nation's chosen language had to be available. Blommaert (1996) points out that there are clear connections between the development of *Ujamaa* and the history of Swahili in postcolonial Tanzania. He points out that it would not be far-fetched to claim that the history of Swahili in postcolonial Tanzania is largely a political-ideological story, in which developments in the conceptualization and implementation of *Ujamaa* were reflected in language-ideological debates, in the development of language planning, in the implementation of language policies, or simply in everyday language behaviour of Tanzanians.²⁷

Through my research I affirmed that during Nyerere's presidency, literature had to conform to *Ujamaa*, directly and indirectly. As it will be explored in Chapter Five of this study, Nyerere used language planners, creative writers, translators and various artists so as to establish ideological hegemony in the country. Through interviews with Professor Mulokozi and Walter Bgoya, I was informed that fear of censorship made literature and translations produced during this time reflect the given socio-political developments. All that was produced was almost uniform. Those who diverged from producing pro-*Ujamaa* literature had to accept the fact that their work would be censored.

²⁶ See '*Ujamaa* and the Swahili Literature in Tanzania'.

²⁷ See Blommaert (1997) and Mwansoko (1990).

At this juncture, it is important to note that there were only a handful of printing cum publishing facilities in the country. Those who had the means published outside the country and could thus include all sorts of anti-establishment rhetoric. Those who published in the country tended to use a lot of symbolism or simply had their work published in news papers. Publishing was under the control of the national political party or the state and therefore censorship was predominant.²⁸

The 1964 Zanzibar revolution brought a clear rupture between the colonial past and the post-colonial present.²⁹ There was land reform where land was distributed to the landless, free education and medical health, slums were cleared and new houses were built such as the Michenzani blocks; generally there was great hope that impacted on the literature itself. However with all these fundamental changes, one of the results of the revolution in Zanzibar and the union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika into Tanzania, was the disappearance of the old body of *The Nights*, *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929) and *Elisi Katika Nchi ya Ajabu* (1930). These were perceived as ‘colonial’ and they there simply remained a few copies on household shelves. In schools, African Series introduced African writers in English as antidote to the previous colonial literary books; the new books were meant to de-colonize and bring about the spirit of nationalism. It made a definite rupture from the old European literature. We find that the question of identity, which had been denied by the colonial state embodied great significance and importance in the face of the decline of colonial literature. There was now African literature in English, a literature that was essentially post-colonial.

The authors of choice included Chinua Achebe, Camara Laye, Miriama Ba, Okot P’Bitek and many others. Their works were seen to reflect the future of post-colonial states. Authors such as Achebe were acclaimed as Africa’s greatest especially since he is perceived as an author who ‘provides insights in his novels on how a society balances its norms,

²⁸ See chapter three for more on publishing in Tanzania.

²⁹ See Lofchie (1965) and Shivji (2008).

expectations, and the individual, and how complex relationships used to be in traditional society' (Gyasi, 2006:26). And this held particular interest and relevance to the Swahili; this is the main reason behind the translation into Swahili of many of his works. Writing at that time, Ohly (1981:10) voices these nationalistic sentiments by arguing that,

the aim of literature should consist in serving the country's policy and principles of development, should help rebuild the foundations of African culture, violated by colonialism, and enable the mutual understanding of ethnic cultures, stimulate pride in the common national cultural heritage, bring into relief features of *utu-nafsi* (individual humanity) and *utu-jamii* (social humanity), activate people's energy socially through reflecting the environment and spirit of the time, in short, literature means to ask such relevant questions (*hisi zetu*).

This 'socialist oriented literature of Tanzania is more rooted in experience' (Mazrui, 2007:39). The experience of mainland Tanzania,

is more explicitly inspired by the living experiences of members of Ujamaa villages...much of this literature seeks to demonstrate the socioeconomic and/or moral superiority of Ujamaa...we find writings that support the ideals of Ujamaa but are critical of the excesses of some of the leaders' (ibid, 40).

In Zanzibar on the other hand, attempts were made to bury the past sultanate³⁰ and colonial vestiges of Swahili literature. Thus, it 'derived its inspiration not from the lived experiences of *Ujamaa* but from the bloody agonies of the Zanzibar revolution of 1964' (ibid). The devastating impact on Swahili literature was the exodus of intelligentsia in Zanzibar where there was an emptying of cultural activities except for those which were favourable to the Zanzibar revolution. At that particular time, generally, young Tanzanian critics understood the nation building process as an ideological aim and it constituted the main basis of evaluation; which means that literature was examined through its ideological content (Ohly, 1981:11). I would also add that the concept of *Ujamaa* in itself ushered a new epoch of intellectual debate at the country's intellectual hub, the University of Dar es Salaam, or the Hill as it is fondly referred to. These debates were finally published by Yash Tandon in

³⁰ This was almost blind for it went as far as banning even the publication of newspapers. Only one newspaper was allowed to exist, *Ukweli Ukidhihiri*, *Uwongo Hujitenga*, (truth prevails where lies must vanish) which was considered to be African.

1982.³¹ This was later reiterated in stronger terms through fiction by the late S.L. Chachage³² in his *Makuadi wa soko huria* (2002) which means ‘pimps of the free market’.

This phenomenon took place in many post-colonial African states. In Kenya for instance, there were similar clampdowns on writers such as the world renowned Ngugi wa Thiong’o and *Malenga wa Mvita* Abdulatif Abdala who went on to write a *diwan* while in prison, *Sauti ya Dhiki* (1973). Faced with the censure and repression of writers, different countries choose different routes; Tanzania generally preferred thrillers such as Katalambula’a *Simu ya Kifo* (1965) and the adventures of a certain Willy Gamba, created by Elvis Musiba. A great author of these times was Kezilahabi whose writing has some existentialist orientation. His *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979) which means ‘The skin of a snake’, was part of the school curriculum because it addressed social and political concerns in Tanzania although it was his *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975) which had approving nods from the state since it portrayed ‘the conflict between private property and the more socialist land tenure system wrought by Ujamaa’ (Mazrui, 2007:39). It has to be noted that there were of course a large number of authors dealing with a multitude of themes in both countries but that is beyond the scope of this study.

During this period, it can be argued that the guidelines issued for the production of literature by the authorities considerably influenced the reception of Swahili prose inside and outside of Tanzania. It also had a normative impact on the strategies applied in translation. It needs to be reiterated that in post-colonial Tanzania, the ideology of *Ujamaa* was the perspective of a new society envisaged by the new ruling elite educated in mission schools.

³¹ See Yash Tandon (1982).

³² The university debate had started as early as 1967 with the Arusha declaration. By 1969, the radical students had started publishing a left wing magazine titled *Cheche*, inspired by Lenin’s spark. The Editors were Karim Hirji, Henry Mapolu and Zakia Meghji, a former minister in the Tanzanian government. It was banned a year later, but the students continued under a new title, *maji maji*, inspired by the colonial resistance against the Germans. Chachage is a product of this debate and hence, his novel contains the question of class, state and imperialism. Regular contributors were Issa Shivji and Walter Rodney among many others. Interview with Salha Hamdani, Rome, 6th March 2008. Interestingly, the students who produced *Cheche* have recently published their memoir: Hirji, K. (ed), *Cheche. Reminiscences of a Radical Magazine*, Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota.

As previously noted, it dominated economically, politically, socially and culturally from 1967 to 1985 in Tanganyika as well as Zanzibar, i.e. the union of Tanzania. Writers such as Adam Shafi, who were considered nationalist during the early independence period,³³ would consider this as the beginning of African Literature in Swahili language. However, the *Ujamaa* period did create a sort of vacuum which had to be filled without much literary alternatives. This vacuum was filled by classical literature from the communist bloc: the then Soviet Union, North Korea and China. This included collected works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and also some Russian fictional prose were translated into Swahili. Amongst these were Maxim Gorky's *Mother* (1906), *Mama* translated into Swahili by Badru Said and *Jamilla* (1988) by Abdulrahim Hamdani. China on the other hand brought in collected works of Mao Tse Tung and a number of translated short stories into Swahili including some of the famous Lu Su's short stories. There were also North Korea collected works of Kim il Sung. All these translations were distributed free of charge in a number of cultural centres. Similarly, in both Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, there were mobile book shops which sold at token prices. It is in this widely domesticated context that these works were used in Adult Literacy Programmes (*Elimu ya Watu Wazima*) during the 1970's, an action that made the literacy rate in the country rise.³⁴

The effects of the promotion, growth and usage of Swahili had a detrimental effect on English and other foreign languages in Tanzania.³⁵ This is because the growth of Swahili meant that translations were undertaken into Swahili and not from Swahili. This translated literature was used as a vehicle for the development of the country's political values as well as increasing the scope of literature within the country as opposed to its growth abroad. This

³³ He has now refuted his nationalistic tendencies and his prose portrays his disillusionment.

³⁴ According to conversations with Salha Hamdani, educationalist, she remembers that as a student at the University of Dar es Salaam at the time, she had taken part in literacy campaigns at the 'hill' as the institution is nicknamed, and was also required to teach literacy to villagers near the university. More on literacy will be covered in the next chapter.

³⁵ More about the language situation in Tanzania will be discussed below.

is affirmed by Blommaert (1997:51) who argues that generally, the generic stylistic innovations in Swahili literature after the Arusha declaration and up to the early 1980's can be said to be inspired by the political question of what or to whom one was writing for in the context of the *Ujamaa* society. Therefore, subconsciously, all that was produced had to have the *Ujamaa* tag to it. Production was homogenous.

It is therefore possible that the discrepancy in Swahili translation, where there exists more translations into Swahili than vice versa, can be attributed to the Arusha declaration, the *Ujamaa na kujitegemea* ideologies, together with the country's language policies. The tendency was for all literary activities to conform to the *Ujamaa* perspective which led to uniformity in all its aspects. Writers were called upon to unite and write in Swahili. When discussing the state ideology and politics of Swahili in Tanzania, Blommaert (1997:52), quotes an incident from the 6th of June 1968 where Nyerere, who was himself an avid writer,³⁶ invited a group of poets to the state house for a meeting. He asked them 'to use their talents in order to promote a better understanding by the people of the land (...) of national politics, and particularly of the responsibilities of the citizen resulting from the implementation of the Arusha Declaration'. Accordingly, a literary political association for the composition of Swahili and poetry in Tanzania (UKUTA)³⁷ was formed.

Among the critics of Swahili literature is Harries (1970) who has actually been very vocal about its state during the immediate post-colonial period. In 1966 he argued that, 'it is plain that the cultural status of the progressive East African is not reflected in what has been written in Swahili. African writers have failed to dissociate their vernacular writing from the immediate African sociological background and there appears no serious creative writing by

³⁶ To his credit, Nyerere wrote numerous political essays which have now been published in his collective essays. Also, as a very religious and devoted catholic, he wrote a number of religious essays including a synopsis of the New Testament in Swahili. During my interview with the Director of TUKI, Prof. Mulokozi, I learnt that the Institution hopes to publish the synopsis written by Nyerere. On the literary front, Nyerere was a good poet and wrote *shairi* and *tenzi* as well which were often published in the popular newspapers. TUKI, Dar es Salaam, 1st July 2004.

³⁷ Chama cha Usanifu wa Kiswahili na Ushairi Tanzania.

individuals. One has to do with folk literature or Arabic stylized conventions, in contrast to free creative writing in the Western sense. In Tanzania there is a national language without a national literature'.³⁸

Following the fact that the situation in the immediate post-colonial period was hostile to the diversity of literary development, one is inclined to acknowledge Harries criticism. Tanzania has not produced world recognized authors and apart from a few writers such as Shafi, Topan, Kezilehabi and Hussein among a few others, Tanzania's creative writing has hardly been translated into foreign languages. The few canonical titles that have been translated into foreign languages do not seem to have had any state backing but are rather the result of individual initiatives by the authors themselves. For example the anti colonial work of Ebrahim Nurudin Hussein's *Kinjeketile* (1970) which was embraced by the state as it exposed German atrocities during the Maji maji war and therefore promoted Tanzanian nationalism, was translated into English by the author himself. Hussein's satires including *Wakati Ukuta* (1967) and *Mashetani* (1971) are widely read especially by secondary school students in Tanzania and universities abroad. Other than his own work, Ebrahim Hussein has also translated a few stories, the most popular being Behrangi's Persian children's story *The Little black fish* (1968) translated as *Samaki Mdogo Mweusi* (1981).

Another author whose individual efforts saw the translation of his works is Shafi Adam Shafi who was educated in Eastern Europe and was quite radical in his writing. Tanzania state embraced two of his novels which are *Kuli* (1979), 'Porter', and *Kasri ya Mwinyi Fuad*, (1978), 'the Estate of Master Fuad' *Kuli* (1979), has never been translated into any foreign language but has been compulsory reading in Tanzania's syllabus for primary schools since it depicts the efforts of the people to take the country from colonial masters. The novel depicts a euphoric image of post-colonial Zanzibar bringing to the fore the Master

³⁸ Harries (1966) in Ohly, 1981:4.

– Slave relationship as it existed on the Isles. This novel has now been translated into French as *Les Girofliers de Zanzibar* (1998), ‘the cloves of Zanzibar’, by Jean Pierre Richard. It is interesting to note that the Swahili title is quite radical in its portrayal of a feudal lord, *mwinyi*, a title that is politically loaded and carries with it notions of ‘exploitation’ and ‘greed’. On the other hand the French translation depicts an exotic image of Zanzibar and tantalizes the reader into imagining a fertile spice island with swaying spice trees such as cloves. Nevertheless, the image is quite befitting since it is those very same cloves that were the backdrop of the master – slave relationship in Zanzibar, enriching one and dehumanizing the other. Shafi’s other works include *Vuta n’Kuvute* (1999), a historical novel that exposes colonialism and was thus widely appreciated by the *Ujamaa* adherents. However, it has not been translated into any foreign language. On the other hand, Shafi’s latest novel *Haini* (2003), which means ‘traitor’, had him vainly searching for a publisher in Tanzania before settling for one out of the country, in Kenya. The novel is a biographical account that exposes the tyrannical and authoritarian post-colonial Zanzibar state which had imprisoned him unjustly, claiming that he had been an accomplice in murdering the first Zanzibar president, Karume. I have been informed that this book is currently being translated into English by a Swahili researcher who wishes to remain anonymous at this time.

Another Swahili author who has been highly acclaimed for his work is Farouk Topan, currently a retired lecturer from SOAS, University of London. His works have been translated into Dutch and English among other languages. His writing reflects the indo–Persian mixture in the Zanzibar culture. *Aliyeonja Pepo* (1973), which played on the concept of heaven has been translated into English. His *Mfalme Juha* (1971) has been highly appreciated by Zanzibaris in particular because to some extent it reflected the idiosyncrasies of the Zanzibar Revolutionary regime between 1964 and 1972 when everything was left at the whims of an ‘idiot’, ‘*juha*’.

There are many more works that have been translated into Swahili from foreign languages particularly English rather than vice versa and I am only aware of one translation from a local language, 'Aniceti Kitereza's *Riwaya ya bwana Myombekere na bibi Bugunoka* (1975).³⁹ It has now been translated into French and German. Kitereza's nephew Gabriel Ruhumbika undertook the English translation. He also translated Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1961) into *Viumbe Waliolaaniwa* (1978).⁴⁰

In the colonial period, one of the reasons for this was the need of materials in 'indigenous languages'. In the post-colonial period, this indigenous language was used as a tool by the colonized in measuring itself up to the colonizer. In the post-colonial period, Swahili is valued as equal if not superior to the languages used by imperial powers. Nyerere for instance who was educated at Edinburgh University, was aware of the canonical place that Shakespeare enjoys in the British polysystem, he therefore translated his works into Swahili, evidently in order to prove that Swahili can carry Shakespeare's worldview across into an African context.

Therefore, in their portrayal of the maturity of Swahili and its intrinsic equivalence to other world languages such as English and French, Nyerere and Mushi translated what they conceived as canonical works from Europe. For instance, Nyerere,⁴¹ translated Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* as *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969) since, not only is Shakespeare regarded as one of the greatest writers in English but the main character, Julius, serves in Julius K Nyerere's personal image as his namesake and also as a politician. Therefore the translation affirms the status of Swahili which was seen as an indigenous language by the colonial powers. It also affirms the status of the new nationalist politicians.⁴² At the same time, a compatriot of Nyerere, Samuel Mushi undertook the task of translating Greek tragedies as well as

³⁹ See above.

⁴⁰ He who was educated at La Sorbonne in Paris. He is also an author and has written a number of books including *Village in Uhuru* (1971).

⁴¹ His full name is Julius Kambarage Nyerere.

⁴² See chapter five.

Shakespeare. His translations include Sophocles *King Oedipus* as *Mfalme Edipode* (1971) and Shakespeare's *The Tempest* into *Tufani* (1969) among others.

In summary, it can be argued that, in the post-colonial period, translations of African writers occupied a large portion in the Tanzanian literary polysystem. During this period, nationalist and satire types of literary works found their way to the public and authors translated their own works or have one or two of their works translated by translators other than themselves; these are mostly foreigners. As previously noted, a new and extremely important feature of this epoch is the introduction of translations into Swahili of famous works by African authors writing in European languages such as Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o. These works co-exist in both foreign languages and in Swahili although in schools, apart from a handful of translations, it is the original works that are preferred rather than the translation. Therefore, it is Achebe's *Things fall apart* (1958) which is read at schools and not the Swahili translation, *Shujaa Okonkwo* (1973) which means, 'Brave Okonkwo'. Other translations that were undertaken in this period include Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Mugo's *The trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1976) translated as *Mzalendo Kimathi* (1978) which means 'Kimathi the Patriot', Franz Fanon's *The wretched of the earth* (1961), translated as *Viumbe Waliolaaniwa* (1978) by Ruhumbika, and Abdilatif Abdalla has also translated Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) as *Wema Hawajazaliwa* (1975) which is its literal translation although unfortunately, the Swahili title has not been able to transcend the political barriers where the English word 'beautiful' is rendered 'beautyful' as a form of resistance where a non standard form is used. This resistance which rejects the expected ways of expressing one's legacy is done through the appropriation of English as the language of the colonizer. A landmark work that uses this strategy is Amos Tutuola wrote *The Palm Wine Drinkard* (1952) where the work 'drunkard'

has become 'drinkard'. Unfortunately, due to linguistic and cultural shifts, such forms are very hard to re-produce so they may capture the original author's intentions.

It is obvious that most of the translations that were undertaken during the post-colonial period were made to reflect a kind of nationalism and patriotism that conform to the *Ujamaa* ideology. Nevertheless it needs to be pointed out that not all translations were made to reflect this patriotism, thus Achebe's *A man of the People* (1966), Ngugi Wa Thiong'o *Devil on the Cross* (1980), *Weep not Child* (1964) and Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946) among others carry literal translations of their original titles.

Currently there is multi party democracy in Tanzania which has opened up the arena for Swahili literature and put an end to the guided literature that was largely imposed by the *Ujamaa*'s ruling elites. Mazrui (2007:42) argues that 'now that *Ujamaa* has virtually been abandoned and the Zanzibar Revolution discredited, we can expect new trends in socialist-oriented writing in Tanzania'. A lot of damage has already been done for two decades when writers could not express themselves freely. Had Tanzanians been able to express themselves freely, the image of scope of the Swahili polysystem today might have been very different. Although, having said that, we find that the current situation is dependent on the whims of the market. The current Swahili market is made up of an audience that accesses blogs, various social sites and international as well as national magazines. It is therefore interested in modern and current affairs or rather, popular fiction as opposed to what can be perceived as 'intelligent literature'.⁴³ We therefore find that the new trends in socialist writing is made up of very few products, one of which is Chachage's new work, *Makuadi wa Soko Huria* (2002), 'Pimps of the free market',

At this point we note that Swahili translation has come a long way from a translation that was oral through to the written; although it needs to be pointed out that the two are

⁴³ Interview with Walter Bgoya held in Dar es Salaam on the 7th November 2006 .

sometimes quite difficult to distinguish in the Swahili context. What is apparent is that, similar to other world polysystems, the future of Swahili literature and translation depends entirely on the output of writers, translators and the market forces. Similarly, its success will be determined by the political development in Tanzania. Therefore, with the strength of multiparty democracy that was introduced in the 1990's, it is expected that pressure groups such as Human Rights groups, women groups, student movements, multitude of political opposition parties and other civil organisations would ensure the flourishing of the entire polysystem. This should guarantee, check and balance the organisation of the state against turning into a hegemony and one party system that existed prior to 1990's.

1.4 Language and Translation Policies in Tanzania

Although Swahili is Tanzania's official language, it needs to be pointed out that over 127 languages are understood to be spoken in the country.⁴⁴ Despite the existence of these other languages, Swahili is the most widely used language nationally. It was the language that was used by the colonizers to bridge linguistic gaps in schools. Initially the German colonial rule chose the use of Swahili over German in schools as well as in colonial administration since this was practical. According to Roy-Campbell (2001:41-42), although the Germans' motivation for this decision has been questioned with implication that the choice may have been motivated by their need to distance themselves from the colonized, it is certain that this promotion of Swahili as a language of education and administration during the German colonial rule was instrumental in the language's spread as a lingua franca in Tanzania. Similarly, following the British government's taking over of the colony, Swahili was preserved as the language of instruction in the first five years of primary education and

⁴⁴ See Batibo (1990) and Mwansoko (1999).

English was introduced as the medium of instruction in the last three years of primary and all of secondary school.

Roy-Campbell (2001) explains that the British administration also carried out all administrative work in English and not in Swahili with the aim of training a small minority of elite, leaving the rest of the population as Swahili speakers with low levels of education. This is evident in the 'Ten Year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika' which stated that ideally 100 percent of the population would attend primary school and only 4 percent would attend secondary school (Roy-Campbell 2001).⁴⁵ The British government only wanted to produce as many graduates as it planned to hire for existing work. This is one of the main reasons for their operating special schools, such as the Tabora Boys Government School where Nyerere was allowed to attend as the son of a Chief; he later trained to be a teacher.

Swahili's rise into a position of power started with Tanganyika's struggles for independence from the British, where we find that Nyerere had used Swahili as the language of unification of the different socio-linguistic groups in the country. Once in power, he adopted an aggressive nation-building campaign that included promoting Swahili as the language of national unity. Julius Nyerere believed in the power of Swahili as the national language and initiated a much repeated rhetoric '*Kiswahili ni lugha ya taifa Tanzania*' (1965: ii), 'Swahili is the language of the Tanzanian nation'. Similarly, one of the main means that was used to spread Swahili was through Education for Self Reliance. Initiating this, Nyerere informed his people:

We have not until now questioned the basic system of education which we took over at the time of Independence. We have never done that because we have never thought about education except in terms of obtaining teachers, engineers, administrators, etc. Individually and collectively we have in practice thought of education as a training for the skills required to earn high salaries in the modern sector of our economy' (Nyerere, 1968: 267 in Smith, 1990).

⁴⁵ This proposed imbalance more or less holds today, with secondary school enrolment still drastically lower than primary school enrolment and among the lowest in Africa at 5 to 6 percent in 2000 (World Bank Group).

Nyerere introduced Education for Self-reliance where education was oriented towards rural life and the decolonizing of the masses (Smith 1990). According to the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), ‘post-independence Tanzania’s priority within the education sector was basic education; it offered a means of forging widespread commitment to the ideals of the state and could empower the population with basic literacy. Attention began to shift towards post-primary education in 2001 when the Government commissioned seven studies to set the scene for policy and strategy development specific to secondary and tertiary education (SARUA, 2009).

In the 1980s there was a tug of war between educationalists who could not agree on what language to be used as the medium of instruction. Some educationalists – specifically the Presidential Education Commission campaigned for Swahili to replace English in the entire education system while others, including Government officials such as Ministers for the state, wanted English to be the medium of instruction. Both camps had valid reasons for their preferences and these, not surprisingly, included issues of identity and pride in the usage of Swahili as opposed to using the language of the ‘colonizer’ which the other camp argued – was the world’s lingua franca.

In February 1982 the Presidential Commission on Education, appointed by Nyerere, recommended that a change from English to Swahili as medium of instruction in secondary schools would be more beneficial (Lwaitama and Rugemalira, 1990). But, two years after that, the Ministry of Education announced that there would not be any changes to Tanzania’s medium of instruction. Therefore in 1984, it was announced by the strategy paper ‘Mfumo wa Elimu’ meaning ‘The education system’, ‘ *Lugha ya kufundishia: lugha zote mbili Kiingereza na Kiswahili zitatumika kama lugha za kufundishia. Lugha ya Kiingereza itaimarishwa katika ngazi zote za elimu* (Tanzania, 1984:19), meaning, ‘the language of

instruction: both languages English and Swahili will be used as medium of instruction. The English language will be emphasized at all levels of education). Later that year, Julius Nyerere announced in a speech that English was needed in secondary schools in order to encourage Tanzanians to learn and value the language (Lwaitama and Rugelamira, 1990).

Therefore, English remained the language of instruction in secondary and tertiary education and Swahili was made the language of instruction from class one to class seven in primary schools. It has been argued that, changing the medium of instruction to Swahili could have increased the demand for secondary education. That would have been ideal for the country's growth and development but the government would not have been able to accommodate that (Lwaitama and Rugelamira, 1990), largely due to the high cost that would have resulted from such a change.

The status and use of language policy in Tanzania has been widely discussed in a number of academic and popular studies.⁴⁶ In Post-Independence Tanzania, the usage of Swahili expanded and it became the language of national unity, the popular language and the language used for all administrative purposes. Then, in 1967, the establishment of the National Swahili Council (*Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa* –BAKITA) was aimed at overseeing the language's development, further standardization and the development and coining of new terminologies. BAKITA developed a number of publications known as *Tafsiri Sanifu*, 'Standard Translation'. By 1985 five booklets that contained terminology lists of various subjects were published. These include 'Tafsiri Sanifu no. 1' which provided the standard translations for government institutions that had changed their names from English to Swahili. The rest of the translations were more focused on terminologies to be used in schools, especially in secondary schools including agricultural and engineering terminologies. These new terminologies were also printed out in the '*Mzalendo*' newspaper,

⁴⁶ See Tumbo-Masabo, Zubeida N. and E. K. F. Chiduo (eds.) (1999) and Yahya-Othman, Saida. (2001).

a term that means ‘the nationalist’. Unfortunately these were never used in secondary schools although the coining of these new terms was quite extensive; according to Mwansoko (1999:146), twenty thousand and nine hundred and seventy five terms were coined by 1989.

This work was then followed by a vacuum in regards to the coining of terminologies. The 6th edition, funded by the Finnish embassy in Dar es Salaam was published more than a decade later in 2004 where 1300 terms for HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases were coined. Nevertheless, it has to be pointed out that, in the 1980s and 90s; TUKI did try to publish a few terminological translations including terminologies for biology, chemistry, physics and literature. It has also compiled some dictionaries with the aim of expanding the potential and usage of Swahili. These include *Kamusi ya Biashara na Uchumi Kiingereza-Kiswahili*, ‘Dictionary of Commerce and Economy’ compiled by Tumbo-Masabo and Chuwa (1999), *Kamusi ya Sheria*, ‘Law dictionary’ compiled by Mlacha (1999), *Kamusi ya Tiba*, ‘Dictionary of Medicine’ compiled by Mwitwa and Mwansoko (2003) and *Kamusi ya Historia*, ‘Historical Dictionary’ compiled by Mwansoko, Tumbo-Masabo and Sewangi (2004).

An editorial of the journal ‘Kiswahili’ which is edited by the Institute of Kiswahili Research (TUKI) pointed out that:

Uongozi wa ‘Awamu wa Kwanza’ uliweka mwongozo na vyombo vya kukuza lugha ya Kiswahili kitaifa. ‘Awamu’ hiyo ilikifanya Kiswahili kiwe lugha halisi ya taifa na ya kimataifa. Hata hivyo mwishoni mwa ‘Awamu’ hiyo pamekuwa na kulegalega katika juhudi za kukuza Kiswahili. Sera ‘mpya’ ya elimu ya juu haikukipa nafasi Kiswahili, bali imesisitiza zaidi matumizi ya lugha ya Kiingereza. Kiswahili kimelaumiwa kuwa kimesababisha kushuka kwa kiwango cha elimu nchini... hakuna sera kamili ya lugha ya taifa. Wakuzaji wa Kiswahili hawajaeleza sababu wala kupewa malengo ya kufikia katika shughuli zao. Kila siku wanaunda istilahi na kuandika vitabu vya kitaaluma, lakini hawaelezi istilahi na vitabu hivyo vitatumiwa lini na wapi! Ukosefu wa sera ya lugha nchini ndicho kikwazo kikubwa cha maendeleo ya lugha ya Kiswahili leo (TUKI 1985: vii).

The leadership of the ‘First Phase’⁴⁷ drew up the guidelines and established institutions for the promotion of Swahili at the national level. This ‘Phase’ made

⁴⁷ Nyerere and his cabinet.

Swahili a true national and international language. Nonetheless, at the end of this 'Phase' the activities in promoting Swahili lost momentum. The 'new' policy for higher education deprived Swahili of any chance as it put more emphasis on English. Swahili has been blamed for the falling standards in education in the country... There is no comprehensive national language policy. Swahili promoters were not yet explained reasons or objectives to be achieved in their activities. They continue to constantly coin terms and write educational books, but they are not told when and where the terminologies and books will be used! The lack of a language policy in the country is indeed the major obstacle for the development of Swahili today.

The debate on whether Swahili or English should be used as the medium of instruction has been well documented by various scholars including Roy-Campbell (2001) and Mekacha (1997). According to Mwansoko,⁴⁸ by 1990 apart from biology and mathematics, all textbooks for secondary schools were translated into Swahili. But nevertheless, the government felt that the language was not sufficiently developed to be used as the medium of instruction in secondary schools. Yahya-Othman (2001) points out that, a decade after the completion of translations in most secondary school subjects; English was still used as the medium of instructions. When confronted about this state of affairs, Ministers of Education have always preferred the use of English as opposed to Swahili. And in the year 2000 the then Minister of Education and Culture, Joseph Mungai, stated in public at the Swahili Day that '...Kiswahili was not yet sufficiently developed' (Yahya-Othman, 2001:81). Mungai has also been quoted pointing out that although 'Swahili fundamentalists' want the government to change the medium of instruction for secondary and higher education from English to Swahili, '*watanzania wengi wamekuwa wakitaka watoto wao wafundishwe masomo ya sekondari kwa lugha ya Kiingereza... huenda wazazi wangeandamana kupinga Kiswahili...*' (Rutaihwa, 2003: 5), which means, 'many Tanzanians want their children to be taught in English during their secondary education ... maybe parents should demonstrate against Swahili'.

⁴⁸ Interviewed in Dar es Salaam on the 1st of October 2006 at the Tanzania Ministry of Education head quarters.

Looking at the terminologies coined and disseminated by BAKITA and TUKI, one finds a number of inconsistencies and deficiencies which cannot be discussed at this point. An example is the term ‘mouse’ which is linked to computers. Depending on the different publications that are disseminated, this term has been referred to as *mauzi*, which is the swahilization of the term ‘mouse’. It is also referred to as *kipenyezi* which pays reference to its function as something that goes through things, *panya* which is the direct translation of the four legged mammal, *kipanya*, which is the diminutive way of referring to a mouse and also as *buku* which means ‘rat’.⁴⁹ These inconsistencies show the government’s reluctance to regulate the promotion of Swahili. They also show a lack of a comprehensive language policy which is one of the factors that have contributed to the falling standards in education in the country.⁵⁰ Similarly, in my interview with Mulokozi,⁵¹ he informed me that the structure of official language use in the Tanzanian government education has not changed since independence. He pointed out at the proclamations made by the state which claims that, Tanzania’s education system works best since:

The main feature of Tanzania’s education system is the bilingual policy, which requires children to learn both Kiswahili and English. English is essential, as it is the language which links Tanzania and the rest of the world through technology, commerce and also administration. The learning of the Kiswahili enables Tanzania’s students to keep in touch with their cultural values and heritage. English is taught as compulsory subject in the primary education whereas at post primary education is the medium of instruction. With regard the Kiswahili, it is the medium of instruction at primary education while at tertiary education is taught as compulsory subject at secondary education and as option at tertiary education (United Republic of Tanzania).

However, despite a recent ‘encouraging growth (over 200 percent) in the number of secondary Schools... the number of secondary schools is only 30 percent of the number of primary schools’ (SARUA, 2009). Similarly, various studies have shown that students in secondary schools struggle to understand due to the change of medium of instruction from

⁴⁹ See Yahya (1990).

⁵⁰ See TUKI (1985).

⁵¹ Interviewed at TUKI, University of Dar es Salaam on the 1st July 2004.

Swahili to English. Tanzanian student graduates from Universities in the country do not master English since Swahili is often used as the de facto language of instruction. Swahili is used to clarify and code-switching is very common in class rooms.⁵² According to Othman-Yahya (1990), this is one of the reasons for the great number of students failing secondary education.

This situation has prompted the well to do Tanzanian parents to send their children to private schools in the country or even abroad in order for them to be taught in English medium schools. The effect of this is that English is made to play the same role that it did during colonialism; it perpetuates inequality. This problem has become even more pronounced in current times where the job market requires English language fluency for easier communication with the outside world. Many young Tanzanians complain that people from neighbouring Kenya are preferred by employers simply because they speak better English. This was explained to me by Upendo Malenga⁵³ and her colleagues who were post-graduate students at the University of Dar es Salaam. They pointed out to me that it was difficult for them to succeed in the job market as the better paid jobs were given to Kenyan undergraduates since they communicated better in English.

The language situation in Kenya is different from that of Tanzania in that, Kenya has 42 indigenous languages, including Swahili. English is the medium of instruction at all levels of education while Swahili is only a taught and examined subject up to ordinary level; it is an optional subject at higher levels. In 1963 when Kenya gained independence from the British, Jomo Kenyatta, the then Prime Minister of Kenya, code switched while giving his inaugural speech from English to Swahili. This act seemed to put Swahili on a pedestal and it was viewed as a national language capable of embodying the spirit of the new independent Kenyan nation. The Kenyan Constitution (1964) delineated Swahili as the national language

⁵² See Roy-Campbell et al (1997). Also, I can personally relate to this situation having been a student in Tanzanian schools from class one in 1984 to 1996 when I finished my A-Levels.

⁵³ Interviewed at the University of Dar es Salaam on the 29th September 2006.

while English was the official language. In actual fact, Swahili is simply an official language in Kenya. All official documents were first and foremost written in English before being translated into Swahili (Whitely, 1969; Mbaabu, 1996; Chimera, 2000).

Despite the establishment's efforts, Swahili in Kenya has battled to find a position of prestige. Although in 1974 Kenyatta declared that Swahili could be used in the National Assembly alongside English, nevertheless, English remained the language of choice. This has built an attitude whereby English is seen as the language of power and influence while Swahili is somewhat portrayed as inferior.⁵⁴ Kenya's linguistic topography reflects the power politics in the country. English dominates other languages. There are obviously great differences in Tanzania and Kenya's language policies. Many people in Tanzania feel that, had Tanzania followed Kenya's path, the country would not find itself in the current situation where there is an educational impasse.

During the colonial period in Tanzania, it was evident that although Swahili was used as the medium of instruction, knowledge of English was nevertheless associated with power, prestige and income. One needed to have been in education for a number of years to be able to use the English language. To counteract this, efforts to raise the prestige of Swahili were undertaken by Nyerere who went as far as creating a school entrance system based on ethnic quotas. Therefore different ethnic groups such as the Chagga, Haya, Hehe and all the other ethnicities had equal quotas and had to learn in Swahili rather than their vernacular language. The quota system was inclusive but it also excluded some intelligent students simply because the quota for their tribe was filled up. It admitted into schools those that were seen as ill prepared children from ethnic groups that have historically been looked down upon such as

⁵⁴ For more see Mbaabu (1996).

the Maasai and Gogo.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, compulsory universal education was soon available for all Tanzanians making the entire nation access some kind of education and Swahili.

Despite the fact that globalization has meant that Tanzanians have found themselves needing foreign languages such as English for communication and to be part of the globalized world, nevertheless, Swahili still remains the country's national language and the language of the masses. In this light, it may be necessary for Tanzania to decide whether it will continue having the language gap between languages of instruction in Primary schools and in Secondary schools or whether it would be necessary to inculcate some kind of language uniformity.

1.5 Summary

The role and status of Swahili translation has evolved through various episodes that have been described in this chapter. The language's expansion has also meant that, through the various epochs, the Swahili polysystem had to be expanded in one way or another. In the colonial period, especially with regards to education, translations were vital in the expansion of the polysystem. In the post-colonial period, the following quote summarizes the rise of Swahili in Tanzania:

The language policy formulated after the Arusha Declaration (which brought about the ideology of *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* / Socialism and self-reliance) gave special privilege to Kiswahili. The concept of 'Socialism and self reliance', which comprises the basis of the Arusha declaration, was a phenomenon for most Tanzanians. In order for the government to succeed in building socialism in the country it became necessary to consciously inculcate the people with this ideology. And this could only be successfully undertaken through the use of Kiswahili (Mwansoko, 1990:78).

This means that, 'the adoption of Kiswahili as the national language meant that its functions had to increase. Apart from its use in politics, it was also used for conducting most of the government's official business including parliament' (Abdulaziz, 1972:158).

⁵⁵ Interview with Dr Georgios Hadjivayanis, London, 13th May 2009.

All these factors are expected to have an effect on translations and on translators. Since norms are part of translator's socialization, it is therefore expected that they would play an active role in the shaping of translation products. We saw that a number of translation titles in the post-colonial period adopted nationalistic tendencies which are a reflection of the Pan-Africanist period in which they were produced. This means that they were aligned with the period and the titles of these translations show some kind of 'regularity of behaviour' (Toury 1995), which means that they follow certain norms. At the same time, both Lefevere (1992) and Hermans (1999) argue that constraints are conditioning factors, not absolutes which means that translators can choose to go against the norms, should they wish. This highlights the fact that, as individuals in a society, translators are constrained by a number of factors including economic, social, cultural, historical and ideological norms of their times; but, since they are individuals, they may decide to move out of the fold and either create their own space or continue being part of the mould that makes up their society.

2. CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical framework and Literature Review

2.1 Background Information

Underpinning this research is the concept whereby translation¹ is considered to be descriptive and target oriented. This means that translation is regarded as an activity that has significant importance in the target culture. This definition enables it to move beyond the traditional comparative approach that was concerned with linguistics and language comparisons. By incorporating social and cultural perspectives, translation is viewed as a human activity which is culturally, historically, emotionally and physically determined. An activity that is not just a ‘window opened on another world’ (Lefevere, 1992:2), but one that introduces foreign influences into a given culture; influences that may penetrate or even challenge that target culture.²

James Holmes is generally considered to be the authority in the field of Descriptive Translation since he initiated the trend of describing the phenomena that is translation rather than using a prescriptive approach into translation.³ The latter published a famous paper titled ‘The Name and Nature of Translation Studies’ at the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics held in Copenhagen in 1972 that was published as proceedings in 1978 and as a book in 1988, posthumously.⁴ The paper has also been included in Venuti’s *The Translation Studies Reader* (2000). In his paper, James Holmes makes a scientific division of translation studies which he

¹To be understood as the conversion of a written text – the Source Text (ST) into a different written language – the Target Text (TT). This is what Jakobson (1959:139) referred to as interlingual translation or translation proper where verbal signs are interpreted by the means of another language. Translation is therefore not an isolated phenomenon suspended in vacuum but is an integral part of culture (Snell-Hornby, 1988:39). For more see: Munday (2008), Venuti (2000), Baker (ed) (1998/2008), Lefevere (1992) among many other translation scholars.

² See Lefevere 1992.

³ See Gentzler (2001), Snell-Hornby (2006) and Venutti (2000).

⁴ See Holmes, James. *Translated!* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988.

calls the basic ‘map’, arguing that it is divided into two branches: Pure Translation Studies and Applied Translation Studies. Pure Translation Studies is subdivided into Descriptive Translation Studies and Theoretical Translation Studies. The Theoretical Study is made up of general and partial theories. According to Munday (2008:10), ‘by ‘general’, Holmes is referring to those writings that seek to describe or account for every type of translation and to make generalization that will be relevant for translation as a whole. On the other hand, ‘partial’ theoretical studies are restricted according to various parameters including, ‘medium’, ‘area’, ‘rank’, ‘text-type’, ‘time’ and ‘problem’ (Toury, 1995:10).

Descriptive Translation Studies, which is the division that interests this study, is sub-divided into product-oriented study, process-oriented study and function-oriented study. These three sides of Descriptive Translation Studies examine translation in different ways. According to James Holmes, product oriented research ‘describes existing translations’ (Holmes, 2000:176).

The starting point of this type of study is the description of individual translations, or text-focused translation description. A second phase is that of comparative translation description, in which comparative analyses are made of various translations of the same text, either in a single language or in various languages (ibid).

Jeremy Munday explains that the final goal of this kind of research is the presentation of a general history of translations although prior to reaching that goal, research undertaken ‘can involve the description or analysis of a single ST-TT pair or a comparative analysis of several TTs of the same ST (into one or more TLs)’ (Munday, 2008:10).

Function oriented research is directed at understanding the function of given translations i.e. the contexts, ‘it is not interested in the description of translations in themselves, but in the description of their function in the recipient socio-cultural situation: it is a study of contexts rather than texts’ (Holmes, 2000:177). ‘Issues that

may be researched include which books were translated when and where, and what influences they exerted' (Munday, 2008:11). Munday (ibid) points out that this kind of research is more common at present and was not as common when Holmes wrote his paper. This is most probably the result of a rise in interest in cultural studies. The last kind of study is that which is process oriented. This type of research 'concerns itself with the process or act of translation itself' (Holmes, 2000:177). Holmes (ibid) explains that it focuses on the 'black box' behind the translation; 'it is concerned with trying to find out what happens in the mind of a translator' (Munday, 2008:11).

At this juncture, it should be noted that this study will consider all the three types of research in its quest of unveiling norms of Swahili translations. It will examine texts, the function of these translations in their contexts and also gather extra-textual references from translators among other sources. Unfortunately, this research will not be able to determine exactly what happened in given translator's 'black boxes', nevertheless, the fact that I have been able to interview some translators among other agents involved in translation should add to the analysis of the extra textual materials and help us understand the reasons behind translators choices; a feat that has never been undertaken in Swahili previously.

The result from the above mentioned examinations 'can be fed into the theoretical branch to evolve either a general theory of translation or, more likely, partial theories of translation' (ibid). These theories would be 'restricted' according to medium, area, rank, text-type, time or problem. At this juncture it should be pointed out that it is not the purpose of the current study to uncover or evolve any translation theory. This can only be done after a close examination of all Swahili translations – a feat that extends beyond the scope of this study.

The above mentioned divisions have exerted great influence on various scholars including Gideon Toury and Kirsten Malmkjaer who have re-represented the

map in their own ways; similarly Pym has criticized it while other researchers including Snell-Hornby and Lefevere set about making new theoretical explorations. Of particular interest are Gideon Toury and Even Zohar who expound on a target oriented Descriptive Translation Study arguing that it is an empirical science since it attempts to describe, explain and predict the translation phenomena.⁵ In the same breath, Toury also develops the Polysystem theory; initially brought forward by Even-Zohar, pointing out that translated literature is not independent of the context in which it exists; therefore it operates in relation to the literary, cultural and historical systems to which it is connected. For instance, Swahili literature is seen as a system and Swahili translations, Swahili poetry and Swahili prose are all systems within the Swahili literary system. They are thus dependent of Swahili literature. The individual systems can be seen as mini-replicas of the entire polysystem.

Similarly, as an entity, translation is comprised of a variety of activities including: the process of translating itself, its relationship to the original text and the entire strategies undertaken by the translator towards its production. All these constitute a series of connected facts⁶ believed to inform and determine the final product. In this sense, the Polysystem theory is concerned with investigating the *how* and *why* in the existence of literary works; exploring questions of transfer, translation, and cultural or literary interference so as to identify the nature and extent of the literary system. Translated literature is part of the system due to ‘...the way the TL selects work for translation; (and) the way translation norms, behaviour and policies are influenced by other co-systems’ (Munday, 2008:108).

The term polysystem is derived from the observation that culture is not a unified monolithic entity but one that is diverse – composed of various systems – such as the literary system, the audio-visual and the linguistic systems. Therefore,

⁵ See Gideon Toury (1995).

⁶ See Toury (1995).

within this polysystem framework, a literary text is not studied on its own but as part of a literary system. There is thus a continuous relationship and linking between works. In this sense, 'literature is thus part of the social, cultural, literary and historical framework and the key concept is that of the system, in which there is an ongoing dynamic of 'mutation' and struggle for the primary position in the literary canon' (ibid).

In conjunction with the above mentioned systems theory, this study will also incorporate Lawrence Venuti's contrasting concepts of *foreignization* and *domestication*. Foreignization, which stemmed from the German translation tradition and was later developed by Venuti (1995, 2001), means 'a close adherence to the foreign text, a literalism that resulted in the importation of foreign cultural forms and the development of heterogeneous dialects and discourses' (Venuti, 2001:242). Foreignizing strategy was first formulated in the 19th Century by the German Friedrich Schleiermacher. It was revived in postmodernism, philosophy, literary criticism and psychoanalysis in the French cultural scene by scholars such as Antoine Berman amongst others. It is 'concerned with making the translated text a place where a cultural other is manifested' (Venuti, 1995: 20). Venuti derives his ideas from Schleiermacher (Lefevere and Bassnett, 1998: 7-10). He proposes that the translator should not remain 'invisible' and should employ the 'foreignizing' strategy so that translations read foreign and introduce concepts that the target audience would not find familiar.

Domestication refers to the translation strategy which employs a transparent and fluent style where foreignness or strangeness is minimized for the benefit of the target audience. According to Venuti (2000), domesticating strategies have been implemented at least since ancient Rome, when translation acted as a form of conquest. During that time Latin translators not only deleted culturally specific

markers but also added allusions to Roman culture and replaced the names of Greek poets with those of their own. Thus, a Greek text would pass as a Latin one and it would read as though it was originally written in Latin. In this respect, this study should lead us into understanding the Swahili translation system and whether the norm is to break cultural conventions and present a foreign original or to familiarize the foreign – thus domesticate and own what is alien.

2.2 Overview of Translation Theories

Literary translation has been vital specifically to literature and has played different roles in different cultures throughout history. Initially it was largely a Euro-centric phenomenon but with time it has been able to shake off its European focus. Bassnett-McGuire (1980:xiv) who traces the historical development of translation by examining the chronological lines of historical approaches particularly in Europe and America, makes this fact clear when she advances that, ‘just as literary studies has sought to shake off its Eurocentric inheritance,’ we find that ‘translation thinking is branching out in new ways’. These different ways are the ideological and linguistic changes that have made it possible for concepts such as post-colonialism and gender to be linked to translation and thus making feasible the analysis of ‘other’ translations such as Swahili translations through an initially ‘Eurocentric inheritance’.

Translation theory has evolved through ‘a set of changing relationships between the relative autonomy of the translated text, or the translator’s actions, and two other concepts: equivalence and function’ (Venuti 2000:5). Function is the ‘potentiality of the translated text to release diverse effects’ (ibid). This includes communication and reader response, if similar to the one produced in the Source culture or not. Equivalence has changed through time in terms of portraying accuracy, adequacy, correctness, correspondence, fidelity or identity (ibid).

Hermans (1996) contextualizes the central concepts in translation by noting that, at an early stage, ‘fidelity’ was replaced by ‘equivalence’ as the theoretical as well as the methodological concept. The aim was therefore for a translator to find the equivalence of the source text in the target text rather than remaining faithful to the source text. Following this, translation initially adapted linguistic approaches in theorizing, practicing and analyzing literary translation. We find for instance, when the equivalence was understood as correctness, translators had to be faithful in finding the correct as opposed to the wrong term for their source text. The translations produced had to be the direct and literal equivalent of the language in the source text. Needless to say, this was to the detriment of the target culture; simply because for instance, ‘looking one in the eye’ does not mean that one is being honest in all cultures – in the Swahili culture it is rude people who look at others in the eye. Therefore slowly a ‘cultural turn’ began to be embraced by a number of translation scholars including the late Daniel Simeoni and Toury among others.

The concept of equivalence has been interpreted and theorized by various translation scholars.⁷ Among the ground breaking scholars on equivalence is Eugene Nida who, despite using a linguistic approach to translation, presents valuable arguments that defend a text’s semantic quality. Nida was able to point ‘the road away from strict word-for-word equivalence’ (Munday, 2008:43). He argued that there are two different types of equivalence - formal equivalence (which in the second edition by Nida and Taber (1982) is referred to as formal correspondence) and dynamic equivalence which he defends as far more than mere correct communication of information. Formal equivalence ‘focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content’ (Nida, 1964:159). It consists of a Target Language item which represents the closest equivalent of a Source Language word. Nida and Taber

⁷ See Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), Jakobson (1959), Nida and Taber (1969) and Baker (1992).

(1982:201) point out that 'typically, formal correspondence distorts the grammatical and stylistic patterns of the receptor language, and hence distorts the message, so as to cause the receptor to misunderstand or to labour unduly hard'.

This is different from dynamic equivalence which is based upon 'the principle of equivalent effect' (Nida, 1964:159). This is where 'the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message' (ibid). Dynamic equivalence is defined as a translation principle according to which a translator seeks to render the meaning of the original in such a way that the target language wording would trigger the same impact on the target culture audience as the original wording upon the source text audience. 'Frequently, the form of the original text is changed; but as long as the change follows the rules of back transformation in the source language, of contextual consistency in the transfer, and of transformation in the receptor language, the message is preserved and the translation is faithful' (Nida and Taber, 1982:200).

Through his experience of translating the bible, Nida (1964, 1982) favours the application of dynamic equivalence as a more effective translation procedure. He points out that the product of the translation process must have the same impact on the different reading audience. With reference to Nida's equivalence concepts, Jeremy Munday explains that the 'introduction of the concepts of formal and dynamic equivalence was crucial in introducing a receptor-based (or reader-based) orientation to translation theory' (Munday, 2008:43). Nevertheless, he points out that both concepts have been criticized by translation scholars who have argued that the equivalent effect is impossible since one cannot have the same effect from two texts in different languages meant for audiences that are also culturally different.⁸ This criticism was also picked up by a descriptive oriented scholar, Lefevere, who pointed

⁸ See Broeck (1978) and Larose (1989).

out that Nida's concepts of equivalence were still too concerned with the word level (Munday, 2008:43). It is a fact that translation texts cannot always produce the same effect by producing a similar reader response and conveying the spirit and manner of the original. The differences in outlook and experiences for instance, make two people from the same culture read differently, let alone various people from different cultures. At the same time, there is the issue of lexical gaps and shifts between languages, which means that there are instances when there is no equivalent; a text is untranslatable.

The concept of translatability has been picked up by various scholars, for instance, Pym and Turk (2001:273) argue that the term 'is mostly understood as the capacity for some kind of meaning to be transferred from one language to another without undergoing radical change'. One may question what is meant by 'radical change' – when does a term in translation acquire a change that is radical and for whom is that change radical? This may simply be a reference to the fact that translatability is understood to be one of the key concepts for understanding encounters and interactions between cultures; interactions that may demand for translations of the 'other'⁹ to be carried out while aware of the dangers of cultural preconceived notions.

Similarly, Hatim and Munday (2004:15) have described the term (un)translatability as a 'relative notion', that 'has to do with the extent to which, despite obvious differences in linguistic structure (grammar, vocabulary, etc), meaning can still be adequately expressed across languages'. They add that, 'for this to be possible, meaning has to be understood not only in terms of what the ST contains, but also and equally significantly, in terms of such factors as communicative purpose, target audience and purpose of translation' (ibid).

⁹ Understood as the concept that was made famous by Edward Said in his book, *Orientalism* (1978).

Whichever definition one finds more adequate, it is most probably safe to argue that translatability is yet another facet of the problems raised by equivalence; and it may also be much more adequate to view this issue from a different angle, for instance, ‘instead of asking what is translatable, one might also ask what kind of translation satisfies criteria of translatability’ (Pym and Turk, 2001:275).

Catford (1965) distinguishes two types of untranslatabilities – the linguistic and cultural untranslatability. In the ‘linguistic untranslatability the functionally relevant features include some which are in fact formal features of the language of the SL text. If the TL has no formally corresponding feature, the text, or the item, is (relatively) untranslatable’ (Catford, 1965:94). On the other hand, Catford argues that for cultural untranslatability¹⁰ ‘what appears to be a quite different problem arises, however, when a situational feature, functionally relevant for the SL text, is completely absent in the culture of which the TL is a part’ (ibid, 99). Catford explains that ‘in many cases, at least, what renders ‘culturally untranslatable’ item ‘untranslatable’ is the fact that the use in the TL text of any approximate translation equivalent produces an unusual collocation in the TL’. Catford then concludes that ‘cultural untranslatability’ may actually simply be collocation untranslatability where the translator finds it impossible to find an equivalent collocation in the target language and he points out that the lack of equivalence is actually ‘a type of linguistic untranslatability’ (ibid). This then blurs the difference between the two types of untranslatability and raises other questions such as, the existence of terms that may be linguistically translatable but culturally untranslatable. Catford refers to this situation as one that ‘gives a ‘cultural shock’ yet no ‘collocational shock’ in translation’ (ibid, 102). He argues that this cultural untranslatability would possibly provide useful insights for translation concerning culture and I would add that, this kind of situation

¹⁰ It should be noted that Catford’s cultural untranslatability has been criticized by scholars including Bassnett (2002: 40).

would be fertile ground and ideal for the study of translation norms. The procedures undertaken by given translators in search of equivalents to their work, together with what a culture considers (un) translatable and the practical approaches that it undertakes to solve this issue would shed light on norms of translation of that given culture.

The importance of translatability to this study lies in the fact that it is a concept that is directly linked to the target language and culture. This is well presented by Wolfgang Iser (1994) when he deals with the issue of translatability. Iser (1994) argues that a foreign culture is not simply subsumed under one's own frame of reference but rather, the very frame is subjected to alterations in order to accommodate what does not fit. In the same breath, he continues to point out that such a transposition runs counter to the idea of the hegemony of one culture over another, and hence the notion of translatability emerges as a counter-concept to a mutual superimposing of cultures.

Equivalence and translatability are concepts that most translation scholars were tackling in one way or another, especially in the 1960's. Venuti (2000) quotes Werner Koller who noted that, by the end of the 70's, equivalence was interpreted differently based on the different context. It was 'denotative' depending on an 'invariance of content', 'connotative' depending on similarities of register, dialect, and style; 'text normative', based on 'usage norms' for particular text types; and 'pragmatic', ensuring comprehensibility in the receiving culture (Koller 1979:186-91 ; Koller 1989:99-104, cited in Venuti, 2000:121). Venuti (2000) continues to point out that this period saw translation set between opposing views. There was translation that cultivated pragmatic equivalence, i.e. translation that was immediately intelligible to the target audience by focusing on the effect and inherent meaning of the text. And there was translation that was formally equivalent, i.e. a translation that

approximated the linguistic and cultural features of the foreign text - the source text. The aim of this type of translation was to find an equivalence that adhered to replacing each Source text item with the nearest Target text correspondent. Currently however, equivalence has been progressively questioned and hollowed out, largely in favour of the concept of norms.¹¹ Norms have taken central stage acting as mirror image of the target society as well as the guiding factors in the translator's decision making as it tries to maintain the status quo. This has meant that equivalence is seen as functional and historical and is linked to concepts of adequacy and acceptability.¹² The type and extent of equivalence found in translations is also norm-governed. Scholars working within the polysystemic framework insist that the description of translations is target-oriented since translations happen in the target language within its culture for the target audience. The question here is not whether equivalence has been achieved but rather the kind and level of equivalence that has been attempted. Equivalence becomes a descriptive, dynamic term for empirical matter rather than a theoretical term referring to a static, abstract ideal.

2.3 Polysystem Theory

For centuries language had been the starting point for translations; this was so until the 1970's when scholars including Gideon Toury (1995) and Itamar Even-Zohar (1978, 1979, 1990 and 1997) argued for a cultural and socio-political turn in translation; they were reacting against the prescriptive translations that had been the norm for years. Therefore, they shifted the centrality of equivalence and replaced it in a larger field of cultural activity where translation was considered target oriented. Toury's work was actually ground breaking for it called for a systematic descriptive study of translation. Toury argued that 'translations always come into being within a

¹¹ See Hermans (1996).

¹² These concepts will be elaborated upon and fully discussed in this chapter.

certain cultural environment and are designed to meet certain needs of, and/or occupy certain 'slots' in it' (Toury, 1995:12). Those 'slots' are determined by the translation strategies that were used within the translation product. The positioning of translation within a grand scheme or system is part of a methodology or theory that has come to be known as the polysystem theory.

The term polysystem was first introduced by the Israeli scholar Itamar Even-Zohar at a translation studies colloquium held at Leuven in Belgium in 1976. The term means an aggregate of literary systems. According to Toury (1978), polysystem means a conglomerate hierarchy of interconnected literary systems that change at given historical times. It is an aggregate of literary systems from high and canonized forms such as poetry to the low or non canonized forms such as children's literature in a given literary system.

Other scholars have also given definitions for the meaning of the term polysystem, for instance in the *Dictionary of translation studies*, Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) define the theory as one that accounts for the behavior and evolution of literary systems. 'The polysystem is conceived as a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate (or system) of systems which interact to bring about an ongoing, dynamic process of evolution within the polysystem as a whole' (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997:176 in Munday, 2008:108).

Polysystem theory sees all semiotic phenomena as belonging to one or more systems and thus analyses these phenomena in terms of their functions and mutual relations. It is therefore a functionalist approach. In simple terms, the polysystem theory does not study literary works in isolation but as part of a literary system.

It is generally agreed that the Russian functionalist framework highly influenced Even-Zohar and Toury when they set out theorizing about the 'polysystem'. According to Simeoni (2008:331), this is not surprising since 'Toury's conceptual

work on translation materialized in the wake of, and alongside, a long lasting continental European tradition of theorizing language and literature where émigré scholars from Russia and Eastern Europe occupied a prominent tradition'. Although Simeoni continues to point out that, there probably were also other inspirational corpuses that may not have been given due credit since, 'transcultural concepts such as 'transfer', 'norms', 'tolerance' or its reverse, 'resistance' to innovation, which have been part and parcel of Polysystem theory since its inception, are clearly Weinreich-derived (1953,86), (ibid:330).

Whatever the inspiration, Toury's polysystem theory was a very important development in translation. The Polysystem theory considers culture to have a centre dominated by an established official ideology. This ideology in turn influences and affects the various systems within the polysystem. So as to understand this concept, one can imagine that there are various systems distributed between the centre and the periphery of the polysystem. Those at the centre dominate and control the polysystem and therefore provide and govern its official ideologies and practices, while those toward the periphery represent alternative or marginal systems.

With regards to this given framework, translation is one of the systems within the wider polysystem. Translation is seen 'essentially as a text-type in its own right, as an integral part of the target culture and not merely as a reproduction of another text' (Snell-Hornby, 1988:24). However, the whole structure of the polysystem is dynamic in that systems from the periphery will tend to attempt to take over the centre, whereas more central ones will tend to defend their positions. Due to this, one may notice that systems at the centre may either exclude or try to appropriate those in the periphery. Therefore, as an element within the polysystem, translation is in constant struggle for survival and domination with other elements. The position of an entity is not static, 'if the highest position is occupied by an innovative literary type,

then the lower strata are likely to be occupied by increasingly conservative types' (Munday, 2008:108). There is thence a sort of struggle of systems within the polysystem and of individual systems within themselves where each entity tries to position itself in the centre.

The distinction made in the Polysystem has its roots in Western academic aesthetics and it should be noted that its application has been questioned.¹³ This is specifically since this division was conventionally devised in the second half of the 17th Century when the development of the printing press in Europe led to the mass production of literature. The works that were appreciated by the elite and the high class were interpreted as high literature; this includes poetry and classics whereas the works appreciated by the masses, thus those without any professional understanding of literature were branded low literature; these included children's literatures and the gothic novel.

But, as pointed out earlier, this categorisation is disputed and in an African context, this becomes even more relevant. This is because folk tales for instance are extremely valued in Africa whereas, Western conventions would categorize these as low literature. Despite the politics related to the above, for the purposes of this study we will refer to the conventional categorisation. This will fit well into our study since at given times, a polysystem's low literatures may be the canon while high literatures may take a lower position. Following this, the position of translated literature fluxes depending on the specific circumstances operating within the literary system. Translated literature may occupy a primary position meaning that 'it participates actively in shaping the centre of the polysystem' (Even-Zohar, 1978:193). In this respect, translations become the leading factors in the formation of new literatures.

¹³ See Whitsitt, Novian, 2003.

Itamar Even-Zohar developed the polysystem theory when he was looking at Israeli Hebrew literature and how translation functions in various societies; that is the status of translation in any given society. Even-Zohar regarded literature as a complex and dynamic system rather than a static collection of independent texts. According to this framework all texts within a given literature, from canonical centre to distant periphery, enter into a permanent struggle for domination. Translated literature is only one of the elements in this battle. Even-Zohar conceived 'translated literature not only as an integral system within any literary polysystem, but as a most active system within it' (Even-Zohar, 2000:193).

Even-Zohar questions the connection between the position of translated literature within a polysystem and 'the nature of its overall repertoire' (ibid). He argues that it is incorrect to assume that translated literature permanently occupies a peripheral position in the literary polysystem. Thus, 'whether translated literature becomes central or peripheral, and whether this position is connected with innovatory ('primary') or conservatory ('secondary') repertoires, depends on the specific constellation of the polysystem under study' (ibid).

In regards to this positioning, Even-Zohar (2000) argues that there are three major situations in which translations occupy a primary position. The first instance is when a young literature is being established and in its initial stages, it looks up to older literatures as models. The second case is when that literature is weak and therefore imports what it lacks and in the third instance is when there is a vacuum or historical changes within a country during which established models lose their validity. This may be during a countries' independence or when it liberates itself from a stronger culture. On the other hand Even-Zohar argues that the normal position for translated literature is that of being secondary where it represents a peripheral system within the greater polysystem. At the same time, translated literature is itself stratified

where some works are primary and others are secondary. According to Even-Zohar, this was the case within the Hebrew translated literature polysystem where, during the world wars, translations from Russian occupied a primary position whereas that of other languages, albeit European such as German and English occupied a secondary position.

Through their theorizing, what Even-Zohar and Toury did was to move away from the prescriptive oriented theories that had been the norm. Gentzler (2001) explains that, until then, translation theory ‘was very much bound up with metaphysical distinctions separating form from content and dualistic theories of representation, it failed to adequately describe the historical situation conditioning specific systems of representation’ (Gentzler, 2001:109). As previously noted, Even-Zohar and later on Toury drew their ideas from the Russian formalist ideas. For instance, it is from Tynjanov (1927, 1971) that Even-Zohar borrowed the idea of systems. The latter believed that elements did not exist in isolation but rather in a constant relationship with other elements in other systems:

the entire literary and extraliterary world could be divided into multiple structural systems. Literary traditions composed different systems, literary genres formed systems, a literary work itself was also a unique system, and the entire social order comprised another system, all of which were interrelated, ‘dialectically’ interacting with each other, and conditioning how any specific formal element could function (Gentzler, 2001:112).

Even-Zohar did not only develop the systems ideas from Tynjanov but also the formalistic concept of hierarchy analysing the different genres. According to Gentzler (2001) Even-Zohar coined the term polysystem to refer to ‘the entire network of correlated systems, literary and extraliterary’ and this term was to attempt to ‘explain the function of all kinds of writing within a given culture – from the central canonical texts to the most marginal non-canonical texts’ (ibid, 114). This theory is thus as concerned with the exploration of questions of transfer, translation, and cultural or

literary interference as it is to identify the nature and extent of the literary systems themselves. Through it, one can observe the position of translated literature, whether it is in the centre or the periphery, and also question the reasons for the given positioning.

The polysystem theory also plays a hand in selection criteria for texts to be translated through norms that were adopted during translation; these are expected to reflect on the society at large. The target culture is understood to be of primary importance since it is the conditions within it that determine what is to be translated and how the work is to be translated. Even-Zohar's polysystem theory was tested and then developed by Gideon Toury who then used the theory as a framework to study the translated literature into Hebrew from 1930 to 1945. He studied the cultural conditions that affected the translation of foreign languages into Hebrew. His aim was to discover the actual decisions made by translators while translating. Through these decisions Toury hoped to find the set of rules, also known as norms that govern translation in the Hebrew Polysystem.

Echoing Toury's work, this particular study will take the Swahili society as the target culture that determines what is to be translated and ultimately how a given text is to be translated. By analyzing translated texts from within the Swahili cultural, socio-political and linguistic context, this study should make evident the translation process and decisions involved and thence the translation norms. This is in accordance with the polysystem theory where it is presumed that 'the social norms and literary conventions in the receiving culture (target system) govern the aesthetic presuppositions of the translator and thus influence ensuing translation decisions' (Gentzler, 2001:108). Culture is of course an integral part of this study since each translation will involve at least two languages which means that it is inevitable that their cultural traditions and therefore their norms be accounted for descriptively.

2.3.1 Translation Norms

According to Hermans (1996), the first step in the direction of the current preoccupation with norms in translation was taken by Jiri Levý, a Czech scholar who was interested in Czech translation norms from the 15th century to 1945. Jiri Levý conceptualized the translation decision process as a game – a series of interdependent cognitive processes under specific constraints.¹⁴ In the 1970's Gideon Toury presented norms as an operational tool in his descriptive approach to translation arguing that translation norms govern the decision-making process in translating which means that they determine the type of equivalence that is reached between the source text and the target text.

Toury (1995: 51), defines norms as ‘the general values or ideas shared by a certain community as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate into specific performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to specific situations providing they are not (yet) formulated as laws’. These are ‘psychological and social entities’ (Hermans, 1996:26). This is because they are specific to a culture, society and time and they come into being through agreed conventions or rules within a society, these rules, often in people’s subconscious, are then internalized by individuals in a community. They ‘constitute an important factor in the interaction between people, and as such are part of every socialization process’ (ibid). Norms act as communication agents; they determine the relationships that a society has within itself in regards to how individuals can act and communicate. Hermans (1996) points out that norms have a socially regulatory function where they play an important role in bringing about the coordination required for continued coexistence in the social sphere.

They usefully mediate between the individual and the collective sphere, between an individual’s intentions, choices and actions, and collectively held

¹⁴ See Zuzana Jettmarová (2002).

beliefs, values and preferences. Moreover, norms and conventions contribute to the stability of interpersonal relations, and hence of groups, communities and societies, by reducing contingency, unpredictability, and the uncertainty which springs from our inability to control time or to predict the actions of fellow human beings. The reduction of contingency brought about by norms and conventions is a matter of generalizing from past experience and of making reasonably reliable, more or less prescriptive projections concerning similar types of situations in the future (ibid).

Let us consider how one may function so as to contribute in the stability of interpersonal relations in Zanzibar. For centuries Zanzibar has been dominated by Islam. It is the *sharia* that has determined and ruled over marriage, divorce and inheritance. Therefore, having a population that is over 95% Muslim, the social norms are hugely determined by that religion. It is therefore the ‘norm’ for people to communicate using Islamic terminologies such as *inshallah* and *alhamdulillah* even when communicating with those who are not Muslims. Everybody is expected to dress conservatively as the dress code is oriented towards the Muslim/Arabic tradition. Western attires are worn but they have to be within what is considered ‘acceptable’. Islamic traditions stretch as far as the expectation on the islands for people of all religions to understand and even take part and celebrate Muslim ceremonies with their neighbours. This is not the case in mainland Tanzania where the inherited laws are from the British colonial state. There is no *sharia*, therefore for instance, the dress code is quite liberal. One can be attired in almost anything without fear of being ridiculed nor insulted.

As social and cultural realities, norms play a very important role in translation; in fact, the very act of translating is itself norm governed.¹⁵ As discussed, historically the relationships that happened within translations were viewed as relationships between languages or texts. The evolution of this view has meant that it is now accepted that translation is communication in a socio-cultural context; and this

¹⁵ See Toury (1995).

brings the issue of norms into context since norms account for the socialization of members of a community. Their importance lies in the fact that they,

are the key concept and focal point in any attempt to account for the social relevance of activities, because their existence, and the wide range of situations they apply to (with the conformity this implies), are the main factors ensuring the establishment and retention of social order (Toury, 2000:200).

A description of these norms should lead to an understanding of why translations have the form that they do, why they exist in a certain way and not another

In translation research, norms are...not really ends in themselves , but means, they are explanatory hypotheses that may help us to understand more about the phenomenon of translation (Chesterman, 1998:91).

Norms have been studied by various scholars.¹⁶ Toury (1995) introduced the concept when he was working on establishing a hierarchy of interrelated factors or constraints that determine or govern the translation product; the constraints that govern translation are the translation norms. He arrived at understanding the translation norms that govern the Hebrew polysystem by comparatively ‘examining several translations of one original text carried out in different periods by various translators’ (Gentzler 2001:128).

Toury argues that translators make choices that govern their translations; while translating, they are aware of the norms which they often have internalized. For translators working towards their native culture and using their mother tongue, it is often the case that these norms have been internalized unconsciously whereas second language translators tend to be overtly aware and conscious of norms that they have acquired. A translator who aims to have an accepted work would tend to conform to notions of correctness for fear of being sanctioned. For instance, if an original contains references that would be considered inappropriate in the target culture, a translator who would be aware of the norms governing his target culture, would in most circumstances make choices that reflect this knowledge. They would for

¹⁶ Including Chesterman (1998), Hermans (1996) and Toury (1995).

instance omit inappropriate passages, rephrase them or simply not translate the work if they doubted its subsequent integration. This is why the translated work would reflect what is acceptable, what is tolerated and what is abhorred. In turn, the researcher of translation norms would then be able to ascertain that the shift in the given cultures has made the translator make the decision. The occurrence of the same decision in many texts would pin point to a trend. In turn, that would direct the researcher into the given norm of translating. In this case, it would be the norm of adaptation through omission. On the other hand, should the translator decide to render what is inappropriate into the target language, the position of his translation within the given polysystem would act as clue to the norm. Thus, probably, by translating the inappropriate, their work would be either marginal or probably not published in the expected target country but another. This is why the place of translation in relation to power and ideology can be understood through norms of translation and also, this is the main reason as to why norms can be ascertained through both the textual and extra-textual sources.¹⁷

Hermans (1996) discusses the role of translation norms in detail and he argues that communication between different cultures proceeds in a given social context. This social context is, needless to say, always complex. Within are for instance power and property relations and perceptions. The power relations, both political and economic have agents such as publishing houses or state institutions through which norms, 'facilitate and guide the process of decision-making' (Hermans, 1996:27). Norms are thus established by various sources, for example patrons such as publishing houses would set norms based on their perception of end reader's expectations.¹⁸ Ideological, economic and power relations within and between

¹⁷ More on this will be discussed in the next chapter- Methodology.

¹⁸ See chapter three for a detailed discussion of publishing in Tanzania.

cultures also often act as the norm-authorities, setting up conventions.¹⁹ Conventions are different from norms in that they are the accepted behaviour and it is only when they become more than the accepted or preferred behaviour that they become norms.²⁰ Hermans (1996) argues that conventions are implicit norms and depend on regularities and shared preferences; they imply acceptance and the mutual recognition of acceptance in regards to different actions. Conventions limit and restrict options that may be taken in different situations making them predictable although they also do not presuppose explicit agreements between individuals. He continues to explain that norms differ from conventions in that they are binding; they carry some form of sanction and may either grow out of customs or get issued by an authorizing body. On the other hand, rules are strong norms and are usually institutionalized by an identifiable authority.

There are various agencies that determine conventions and norms, acting as agents for the generally accepted social constraints on behaviour. One of these agencies is Patronage. 'Patronage as a determinant of translation practice' (Tymoczko, 1999:31) plays an important role in this field. According to Tymoczko (1999), patrons were once wealthy aristocrats but are now the publishing houses, presses, universities, the state and so forth, they 'determine the parameters of what is translated just as they determine parameters of what is published' (ibid). Drawing on the polysystem theory, Lefevere(1992:28) advances that the canonisation of certain works and the codification of a poetics in literary systems are both the cause and the effect of each other. Codification is the canonisation of authors whose work conforms to the codified poetics. Lefevere (ibid) argues that these canons then occupy a central position in a given polysystem. The professionals working within the literary system such as critics, reviewers and translators play an important role in the formation of canons and

¹⁹ See chapter five for a detailed discussion on how ideologies such as *Ujamaa* shaped the Swahili Polysystem.

²⁰ See Hermans (1996).

poetics. They reject texts that conflict with the dominant idea of what literature should be, what society should be and the dominant ideology (ibid, 14). Lefevere (ibid, 14-15) argues that professionals in the literary sphere tend to re-write and adapt texts until they are deemed acceptable to the poetics and ideology of their time and place and in doing so, they are in-sync with patrons who regulate the relationship between the literary system and the other systems which, collectively, form a society and culture, a polysystem.

Therefore, to understand how the Swahili polysystem functions, I interviewed some of the most prominent publishers in Tanzania. These include Walter Bgoya, Demere Kitunga and Isidor Karugendo. Interestingly, they all voiced that publishing of translation is quite marginal in their organisations. Bgoya asserted that his publishing house, Mkuki na Nyota, would publish about two to three works of translated literature annually. Rarely would his publishing house commission a translator to do the work but rather, translators have tended to translate out of their own volition.²¹ Similarly, Kitunga of E&D, advanced that although her company had recently had the benefit of receiving some funding for publishing children's literature, published translations remained very few. As such, an obvious effect of the position of patronage in Tanzania has made it a trend that translators translate through their own initiatives. This trend can be traced back to the post-independence period where we find translators including Nyerere and Mushi all had their 'day jobs' but also out of their own initiative translated too. The dominance of this trend can be stretched out further where one can argue that in Tanzania, it is the norm for translators to translate out of their own initiative. Apart from Brenn who translated *The Nights* as part of the colonial educational initiative to produce Swahili books, none of the other translators in this study were commissioned to translate.

²¹ There were occasions, such as Ebrahim Hussein's translation of *Kinjeketile* where an outside body, in this instance IFRA, finances the text. Similarly the United States Information Services commissioned the translation of *Animal Farm*, their main interest in this particular translation being related to the cold war as the work equates Socialism to an evil system. Tanzania was then on the verge of adopting African Socialism in the form of *Ujamaa*.

In the same breath, although self commissioned, nevertheless, what the translators produce is norm governed or at least, norms play an important role in translator's output. The decisions taken by translators are formed around alternatives such as: should the preferred mode be adapting or literal translation, should word for word or sense for sense be the strategies of choice, what sort of equivalence is preferred.

Norms play a significant part, firstly, in the decision by the relevant agent in the receptor system whether or not to import a foreign-language text, or allow it to be imported; secondly, if it is decided to import, whether to translate (whatever the term may mean in a given socio-cultural configuration) or to opt for some other mode of importation; and thirdly, if it is decided to translate, how to approach the task, and how to see it through' (Hermans, 1996:27).

As has been noted earlier, the decision making is understood to be governed by norms and the entire translation process is a transaction between interested parties for whom various modalities and procedures involved in this process presupposes choices, alternatives, decisions, strategies, aims and goals (Hermans, 1996). Norms play a crucial role in these processes. To the translator, these norms 'determine the (type and extent of) equivalence manifested in actual translations (Toury, 1995:54). At the same time, 'as strictly translational norms can only be applied at the receiving end, establishing them is not merely justified by a target-oriented approach but should be seen as its very epitome (ibid, 53). Toury (1995) argues that having used norms as an operational tool vital in the translator's decision making process, he can identify them through a notion of a graded and dynamic cline. This constitutes a continuum between two extremes, with formulated rules on the one end and instances of idiosyncratic behaviour on the other. Norms also make up a graded system, in which certain are ascribed greater importance than others. According to Toury (1995), the concept has a dynamic aspect. On the one hand, near-rules may fade while individual deviations acquire the status of norm; on the other hand, variations are likely to be

found within as well as between cultures. Translation norms are regarded as independent of systemic differences between the source and target language.

Norms are not determined by the source culture. The notion thus relates to the target oriented-ness of the polysystem theory in that it represents the possibilities and constraints provided by the target community. Thus, 'translation as an act and as an event is characterized by variability, it is historically, socially and culturally determined, in short, norm – governed' (Toury, 1998:01). Norms regulate behaviour by advocating what is accepted or tolerated, on the one hand, and what is disapproved of or outright forbidden. According to Toury (1995), norms occupy the middle ground in a scale of socio-cultural constraints ranging, in terms of their force, from rules to mere idiosyncrasies. The borderline between these constraints is by no means absolute, quite the reverse. They can gain or lose their validity across time along with 'changes of *status* within a society' (Toury, 1995:54; emphasis original). Learning this code of conduct is part of an individual's socialization process. Toury (1995) argues that possible deviations from what is considered the norm do not pre-empt the existence of norms; rather, deviations occur at the risk of sanctions on the part of society. He also draws a distinction between actual norms and normative formulations. Normative norms may reflect actual norms in society and they may also be motivated by other reasons, such as the desire to create new norms. Norms change over time, space and even regionally. Thus, in our case, there might be norms of translation that are specifically widespread in Zanzibar whereas they may not be as widespread in Dar es Salaam. According to Toury (1998), changes may be prompted by translators themselves, translation criticism, translation ideology, and translation schools. And the fact that norms change their status across time means that at a given time there may exist three different sets of norms in a society: mainstream norms, traces of previous norms, and rudiments of new ones.

According to Toury, the identification of norms is meant to lead to the eventual identification of probabilistic laws of translation. He comes up with two exemplary laws of the way translators produce translations. These laws are interconnected and are the law of increasing standardization and the law of interference from the source text. The law of growing standardization is one 'which decades of text-based research into translational products, in many different cultures, have been able to come up with...which can also be presented as the law of the conversion of textemes to repertoremes' (Toury, 1995:267). Toury offers a number of formulations and re-formulations which build on the general idea that 'source-text textemes tend to be converted into target – language (or target-culture) repertoremes' (ibid, 268). This means that in translation, the contents of the source-text tend to be replaced by those from the target-language genre. A repertoreme is any sign, no matter its rank and scope, which forms part of an institutionalized repertoire or in other words, is available as a choice that makes cultural functions realizable. When this repertoreme is 'retrieved from the repertoire it is part of and is put to actual use...it enters into a unique network of internal relations, peculiar to that act/text' (ibid). These relations, according to Toury give that retrieved item ad hoc textual functions that make it a texteme. On the other hand, the law of interference states that 'in translation, phenomena pertaining to the make-up of the source text tend to be transferred to the target text' (ibid, 275). This means that interference from the Source Text to the Target Text is seen as a default act; the copying of Source Text linguistic features can be positive or negative. They are negative when they create Target Text patterns that are abnormal and they are positive when there exists in the source text features that will not be non-normal in the Target Text. Toury's Laws have been criticized by a number of scholars including Hermans (1999), who questions the possibility of a law that encompasses all the variables that are relevant to

translation.²² Jeremy Munday (2008:116) sums this up when he points out that ‘the ‘laws’ that Toury tentatively proposes are in some ways simply reformulations of generally-held (though not necessarily proven) beliefs about translation. It is also debatable to what extent a semi-scientific norm/law approach can be applied to a marginal area such as translation, since the norms described are, after all, abstract and only traceable in Toury’s method by examining the results of the often subconscious behaviour that is supposedly governed by them’. Similarly, Anthony Pym has recently analysed Toury’s laws of how to translate. In his abstract he writes:

...the probabilistic nature of Toury’s laws, which would become strong or weak depending on variable sociocultural conditions, means that they cannot be universal on the solely linguistic level, where they would in fact appear to contradict each other (Pym, 2008:311).

He therefore proposes that the tendency to standardize and channel interference might be found in ‘the dynamics of risk management’ (ibid). Pym (2008) includes Baker’s (1996) universals in his discussion pointing out that the universals of explication, simplification, normalization and levelling out can be ‘more or less fitted into Toury’s law of standardization’ (ibid, 320), which questions the position of the law of interference.

Bearing the contradictory hypotheses and the criticisms thrown at these laws, together with the fact that this study only involves a selection of Tanzanian Swahili translations, I will not take any steps towards discerning laws of Swahili Translations. That can be attempted in the future once more data on Swahili translations has been accumulated. I am solely interested in the general norms of Tanzanian Swahili prose translations. I will therefore use Toury and Even-Zohar hypotheses as ‘a map to make sense of territory’ (Lefevere in Hermans 1999: 126), rather than take their hypotheses wholesale.

²² Also see Gentzler (1993).

There are different types of translation norms which govern the different stages of translation. Toury (1995, 1998) distinguishes three types of norms which are: preliminary, initial and operational norms. Chesterman (1997) distinguishes two which are the Product or expectancy norms and Professional norms. Let us consider these different types of norms.

2.3.2 Types of Norms

Toury (1995: 56-59) introduces translation norms through a discussion of translation as a norm-governed activity. The first norm he discusses is the initial norm which he prioritizes simply due to it being a basic norm and is therefore logically superordinant. This norm relates to the tangible choices made by translators who have the choice of subjecting themselves to either the source norms or the target culture's norms. It is these two choices that make up the opposing poles of adequacy and acceptability. These are the theoretical poles between which actual translations are likely to hover. 'Adherence to source text norms determines a translation's adequacy as compared to the source text, subscription to norms originating in the target culture determines its acceptability' (ibid, 56-57). Thus, if for example, a translation employs the linguistic and cultural norms of the source language culture, the end product will be adequate at best. On the other hand, if the norms followed are from the target culture, the translation will be acceptable. A given translation need not be consistent in its adequacy or acceptability. The initial norm relates to the translator's conscious and unconscious choices made while translating. Toury (1998) explains that the initial norm will reflect whether the translator is trying to remain faithful to the text for instance or if he/she is trying to adapt the text.

The other type of norm that he also discusses is the preliminary norm which relates to extra-textual issues. It is a type of norm that is involved with the factors that

play a role towards the production of a translation. The Preliminary norms inform the position of translation within the polysystem of the target culture, the choice of languages and texts to be translated as they relate to the translation material. It informs the translation policies governing the choice of text types that are imported to a particular culture and language in a given time; these are ‘those factors that govern the choice of text-types, or even of individual texts, to be imported through translation into a particular culture/language at a particular point in time’ (Toury, 1995:58). This norm also relates to considerations on directness of translation where the target culture’s level of tolerance is measured. Preliminary norms play an important role towards determining what should be translated from a range of languages and cultures at given times and also the kind of practices that are accepted in a given culture, for instance, some cultures may not be willing to have translations undertaken through an intermediate language. It also determines the preferred writers, genres and schools of a given time, and answers the following questions concerning translation:

...from what source languages/text-types/periods (etc.) is it permitted/prohibited/tolerated/preferred? What are the permitted/prohibited/tolerated/preferred mediating languages? Is there a tendency/obligation to mark a translated work as having been mediated, or is this fact ignored/camouflaged/denied? If it is mentioned, is the identity of the mediating language supplied as well? And so on (ibid).

The third type of norm is the Operational norm which describes the presentation of the target text. It governs the way translations come into being thus it involves both source and target norms which in turn govern ‘directly or indirectly, the relationships as well that would obtain between the target and source texts. In other words, what is more likely to remain invariant under transformation and what will change’ (ibid, 58). The operational norms are the actual decisions taken by the translators while translating.

The operational norms are sub divided into Matrical norms and Textual-linguistic norms. Matrical norms relate to textual segmentation, addition of passages and footnotes, deletion or relocation of passages; 'the extent to which omissions, additions, changes of location and manipulations of segmentation are referred to in the translated texts (or around them) may also be determined by norms, even though the one can very well occur without the other'(ibid, 58). Textual-linguistic norms control the selection of target text linguistic material including words and phrases used.

As previously noted, another scholar who has researched translation norms, albeit to a small degree is Chesterman (1997). He divides norms into two types which are expectancy or product norms and professional or process norms. Expectancy norms are established by 'the expectations of readers of a translation concerning what a translation should be like' (Chesterman, 1997:64). These are determined by the translation traditions in the target culture and economic and ideological reasons. According to the latter, expectancy norms determine the value judgements of a translation through determining whether a work is appropriate or acceptable. This is similar to Toury's (1995, 1998) initial norm which also has evaluative properties, aiming at discerning the translation that is accepted through its conformity. Chesterman (1997:66) argues that these norms are sometimes 'validated by a norm-authority of some kind'. Their validation tends to determine a given translation's reception. Professional norms are a by product of these norms, they are actually the 'accepted methods and strategies of the translation process' (ibid, 67). These reflect the way professional translators produce their translations in a given culture.

Professional norms are in turn sub-divided into three types which are accountability, communication and linguistic norms. The accountability norm is ethical type of norm which deals with the translator's loyalty to the source text. It

determines the standard of the work, for instance, whether it is thorough. Then there is the social type of norms called the communication norms which require the translator to optimize communication while translating. Thus, the translator is hereby perceived as a communication expert in conveying his message. And the third type is a linguistic norm called the relation norm. This norm deals with the relationship between the source and the target text. It requires that an appropriate amount of similarity be established and maintained between the source text and the target text. This similarity can also be interpreted as the equivalence although Chesterman (1997) rejects the narrow definition of equivalence. He sees equivalence as the translator's judgement based on the 'text-type, the wishes of the commissioner, the intentions of the original writer and the assumed needs of the prospective readers' (ibid, 69).

Chesterman's (1997) norms echo Toury's (1995) initial and operational norms to a large extent. This is asserted by Munday (2008:117) when he points out that Chesterman's set of norms covers 'the area of Toury's initial and operational norms'. It seems therefore that, to a large effect, Toury's norm categories encompass the entire concept of translation norms. This is much more relevant to this study especially since Toury's norms are tightly packaged with the polysystem theory. Due to this, in our analysis, we will use Toury's three types of norms.

The operational norms will form the basis and bulk of this study. This norm will determine the completeness of the translations, the lexical items, stylistic features and the relation between the source text and the target text. Preliminary norms will include the factors that determine the selection of texts. Issues of directness of translations and their effects will be determined by this norm. Thus, for instance we find that a number of Swahili translations are translated through an intermediary language and not directly from the source text. We will investigate whether this practise is camouflaged and if not, is it tolerated? And why is it practised?

In the final analysis, it is the initial norms that will determine the norms of Swahili translations by proposing the adequate and acceptable trends of the Swahili translations. Thus, the trend of Swahili translations, the power relations involved in deciding whether to import a foreign text or not to import, to translate it or not and even how to translate the work followed by its status and the norms that are actually its social realities should lead us towards not only understanding translation as a concept but the Swahili society as a whole. 'Norms are deeply implicated in the social and cultural life of a community' (Hermans, 1996:32); an understanding of Swahili translation norms should open avenues towards the given ideals of correctness and conformity. These in turn would pave the way into an understanding of the trends and values of the Swahili in regards to translation.

2.4 The Domesticating and Foreignizing Strategies

Although the polysystem theory is the guiding theory for this study, the domesticating and foreignizing strategies are also extremely relevant to this study since they will determine the trend of the translation norms. Venuti (1998) sums up the link between the domesticating and foreignizing strategies and norms as contested by Toury (1995) when he argues that,

Toury's method... must still turn to cultural theory in order to assess the significance of the data, to analyze the norms. Norms may be in the first instance linguistic or literary, but they will also include a diverse range of domestic values, beliefs and social representations which carry ideological force in serving the interests of specific groups. And they are always housed in the social institutions where translations are produced and enlisted in cultural and political agendas (Venuti, 1998:29).

Thus, the strategies of foreignization and domestication are strategic in analyzing norms. The domesticating method is 'an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language cultural values, bringing the author back home' (Venuti, 1995:20).

This is the adherence to fluent translations where the audience finds the text immediately recognizable, intelligible and familiar.

The foreignizing method is the 'ethno-deviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad' (ibid, 20). A foreignizing translator can use 'a discursive strategy that deviates from the prevailing hierarchy of dominant discourses (e.g. dense archaism), but also by choosing to translate a text that challenges the contemporary canon of foreign literature in the target language' (Venuti, 1995: 148; 310). Foreignization can be practiced by close adherence to the foreign text, retaining cultural markers and producing a variation on the current standard dialect of the receiving language.

As previously asserted, the foreignization and domestication were derived by Venuti (1998) from Schleimacher (1813) who advanced that the translator can leave the reader in peace and move the author towards him or vice versa (Lefevere and Bassnett 1998: 7-10). In *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti (1995) developed these ideas and argued that translators have tended to make themselves 'invisible' by translating fluently; which means that there has been a tendency for translations to exist as originals, in the process, effacing the fact that they are translations. By producing works that read fluently, translators have made themselves invisible. Examining the Anglo-American tradition, Lawrence Venuti (1992, 1995) argues that, the predominant tradition, or the norm in other words, is to domesticate. He argues that publishers and audiences insist that a text be 'rewritten in the transparent discourse dominating the target-language culture... coded with other target language values, beliefs and social representations' (Venuti, 1992:5). To combat this tendency, Venuti (1998) advocated for a foreignizing strategy as opposed to a domesticating one.

These concepts have also been discussed by various theorists including Walter Benjamin in his work, *The Task of the Translator* (1923), George Steiner in *After Babel* (1975) and Antoine Berman in *The Experience of the Foreign* (1984). Venuti (1995), like theorists who preceded him, advocates for foreignization because domestication produces transparent, fluent translations where translators become invisible. Their work is effaced, thus the translator needs to be made 'more visible so as to resist and change the conditions under which translation is theorized and practiced today, especially in English-speaking countries' (Venuti, 1995:17). Furthermore, this strategy shows respect for cultural others in the struggle for cultural equality. It 'is a non-fluent or estranging translation style designed to make visible the presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the ST and protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture' (Munday, 2001:147).

The foreignizing strategy has been criticized by scholars such as Robinson (1998) for being inherently elitist. Robinson (1998) questions whether it is tenable. Nevertheless, the ideals advocated in the foreignizing strategy are of interest because they answer questions regarding the assimilation and differentiation of a source text by the target text; the levels of which are directed by norms. This strategy echoes the post-colonial theory in that, it too 'can be a form of resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism, in the interests of democratic geopolitical relations' (Venuti, 1995:20). It is thus synonymous to post-colonialism by striving towards a common goal of locating 'the alien in a cultural other' (Venuti, 1995:309). The foreignizing strategy 'pursues cultural diversity, foregrounds the linguistic and cultural differences of the source language text and transforms the hierarchy of cultural values in the target language' (ibid).

By gaining insight into the decisions made to either bring the text to the audience (domestication) or the audience to the text (foreignization) we will be able

to determine whether the trend in Swahili translation has been that of making ‘severe demands on the audience, requiring the audience to conform to the beliefs, customs, language and literary formalism of the source culture’ (ibid, 29) or whether their decisions have tended to conform to the ‘dominant audience’s cultural, linguistic and literary expectations’ (ibid, 30) .

These decisions are normally seen through translations that have conformed to notions of correctness. In other words ‘translating correctly’ amounts to translating according to the prevailing norm(s), and hence in accordance with the relevant, canonized models’ (Hermans, 1996:33). Translation norms as we have seen reflect the dominant values and ideals of a society. This approach allows room for micro-level textual studies, but that also stresses the importance of macro-level sociological expansions of the field. In this way one should gain insight into the many factors that characterize and determine the Swahili translation product.

2.5 Literature Review

Although there has not been a comprehensive study on Swahili translation, nevertheless, there is a limited number of studies that have dealt with certain aspects of Swahili translations. This will be evident once some of these works are reviewed.

Directly linked to this study is Geider’s “Alfu Lela Ulela: The Thousand and One Nights in Swahili speaking East Africa”. This study offers a survey of the existence of tales *The Thousand and One Nights* in the Swahili regions of East Africa prior to the publishing of the Swahili translation by Brenn and Johnson in 1929. Geider traces the existence of these tales in Swahili folktales through works such as Edward Steere’s *Swahili Tales* (1870). He also includes a brief commentary on the translation of *The Thousand and One Nights* in Swahili. He reviews the influences of oral translations in these tales and concludes that the tales were orally narrated in an

abbreviated form and remain close to the Arabic original with minor adaptations to the African environment. Geider's paper offers a historical background to my research. It does not comment on the strategies undertaken by the Swahili translators nor does it look at any kind of translation trends. Similarly, his study has not looked at any of the other translations that were undertaken during the colonial period. These are all issues that will make up the corpus of this study's fourth chapter.

Another work that is relevant to this study is a four page paper by Lyndon Harries' on "Translating classical literature into Swahili," published in 1970. In his paper Harries gives a short critique of the 'classics' which he perceives as those works that have universal values and can therefore be translated into any language and culture. Harries comments on the translations of *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) into *Elisi katika nchi ya Ajabu* (1940) and *Gulliver's travels* into *Safari za Gulliver* (1932). He comes to the conclusion that the translator of *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) took too many liberties and underestimated the intelligence of the Swahili by portraying Alice as an African girl. Harries suggests that by using this strategy, the translator could never have remained faithful to the original text. On the other hand, although Frederick Johnson took concessions by leaving half of *Gulliver's Travels* out, he is judged a good translator; the basis for which Harries does not offer. Harries concludes that more translations of the classics into Swahili are needed and in this spirit, praises Nyerere on his translation of *Julius Caesar*. Harries judges translations based on his own personal aesthetic preferences. There is no consideration of translator's strategies, for instance Ermytrude St Lo Malet who translated *Elisi katika nchi ya Ajabu* (1940) was rewriting or domesticating. And there are many reasons that prompt translators to make different decisions. These are all factors that will be considered and presented in this study; a feat that has never been undertaken in Swahili prior to now.

A recent work published by Mazrui (2007), titled *Swahili Beyond the Boundaries: Literature, Language and Identity* also deals with translation. In this work Mazrui looks at the ways in which Swahili has been reconfigured globally and locally. Historical effects of the cultural interchange between Islam and the Swahili coast, colonialism and currently globalization are seen to play an important role in Swahili literature. A literature that encompasses ideas of hybridity and questions its boundaries. Of importance to this study is chapter four of the book where Mazrui looks at “Translation and the (re) configuration of the Swahili literary space”. Although Mazrui offers a clear analysis of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* as translated by Kawegere as *Shamba la Wanyama* and a historical analysis of a number of Swahili literary works, he does not look at the decision-taking process that led to that translation nor does he refer to any trend or norms of translation into Swahili. His work is not an analysis of the decisions that have guided Swahili translators but rather a discussion on the relationship between translated literature, Swahili and politics of translation.

Although not directly linked to this thesis, there are also some studies that have been done on religion and translation. Justo Lacunza-Balda in “Translations of the Qu’ran into Swahili, and contemporary Islamic revival in East Africa” looks at three translation versions of the Qu’ran in Swahili together with their introductory and explanatory texts. These are G. Dale’s translation published in 1923, M.A. Ahmadi’s published in 1953 and A. S. al Farsy’s published in 1969. Dale’s translation was received with scepticism since he was a Christian missionary and his translation did not contain the Arabic text. His work refers to Muslims as ‘Muhammedans’. This fact, coupled with the idea that, according to Balda, Dale’s reason for translating was aimed to discourage Muslims from reading or reciting the Qu’ran ‘like parrots’, without understanding, made his work unpopular and fuelled

antagonisms between Muslims and Christians. The second translator, Ahmadi was a Sheikh of the Ahmadiyya sect²³ while the third was a famous Sunni²⁴ sheikh by the name of A.S. Farsy. These two have disagreements in regards to Islamic doctrine therefore arguments were brought forth in regards to the Ahmadis' supposed mistranslation to suit his sect's position. Balda gives a background history of these translations. He does not offer a commentary of the translation's strategies.

The theme of translation and religion is carried on by Yusuf in "An analysis of Swahili exegesis of Surat al shams in Sheikh Abdullah Saleh al Farsy's Qu'rani Takatifu" which analyzes the commentary and translation of the modern Qu'ran in Swahili. This translation according to Yusuf is a response to Dale's and Ahmadi's translations of the Qu'ran. Farsy saw the two as mistranslations. Yusuf then goes on to offer a prescriptive analysis of Surat al Shams in the Qu'rani Takatifu. He gives a list of terms used that derive from both African and Arabic languages before commenting on the themes of the Surat vis-à-vis the choice of vocabulary used. Yusuf concludes that Farsy's translation helps to make the African make sense of Islam.

In "Swahili as a Religious language" Topan looks at how Swahili was adopted by Christianity and Islam so as to convey their messages. He argues that the process went beyond translation and was a question of finding the right vocabulary for the right audience. The links between Swahili, Islam and Arabic are offered in conjunction with Swahili and Christianity. Translations of the bible around 1930 had to use Swahili words of Bantu origin rather than those of Arabic origin which had been used prior to that. Arabic was seen to have a direct link with Islam. Topan also

²³ Ahmadiya is a religious sect founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani in 1889. He was born in a small village called Qadian in Amritsar, East Punjab. Its followers are known both as Ahmadis and Qadianis.

²⁴ The Sunni the largest sect of the followers of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad and his Companions. The term sunni is derived from the Arabic word *Sunna*, which means customs, rites, norms, behaviour. Thus the sunni believe that they follow in the footsteps of their prophet and that they are the salvaged group.

includes a brief commentary of the bible translations through the choice of terminologies used which means that the commentary is prescriptive as opposed to descriptive. Topan concludes that Islam and Christianity gave Swahili an ecumenical status.

The first and only guide to Swahili translation is Mwansoko's *Kitangulizi cha Tafsiri: Nadharia na Mbinu* (1996). The book is meant for translation studies students although amateur translators of Swahili may find it useful. It deals with translation studies in general the practice of translating, presenting the history of translation studies on a world scale. In this guide Mwansoko has not really dealt with Swahili translation as such but rather what has been written on translation studies in general. However this work offers a valuable contribution to Swahili translation especially since Mwansoko has included case studies in Swahili translation. It needs to be pointed out that this work is actually a representation of Peter Newmark's *A Textbook of Translation* (1988).²⁵

In this book Mwansoko has included Mekacha's "*Tafsiri ya Ushairi*", 'Translating Poetry' and Masoko's "*Tafsiri ya riwaya ya Bwana myombekere na bibi bugonoka ntulanalwo na bulihwali: juzuu I & II*" meaning, 'Translation of the novel master Myombekere and madam Bugonoka Ntulanalwo and Bulihwali: Volume I & II'. Of more interest to this research is Masoko's paper; a commentary of the Swahili translation from Kikerewe done by the author himself, Anicet Kitereza.²⁶ He does a comparative study of the vocabulary from the source text with that of the target text. He assesses that the translator undertook a word for word translation. This he finds, is rather 'lucky' because, although there are differences between Swahili and Kikerewe, there are also many similarities which means that the work is not too foreign. He arrives at the conclusion that the author and translator did the best he could have

²⁵ Newmark, Peter, *A Textbook of Translation*, New York & London: Prentice Hall, 1988.

²⁶ See chapter one.

done; especially taking into account the fact that there is never complete equivalence in translating. This study is more prescriptive oriented and places its value judgement on the linguistic choices that were taken by the translator.

Mwansoko has also collaborated with Tumbo-Masabo and written *Matumizi ya Kiswahili Bungeni* (1996), 'Usage of Swahili in parliament', where they discuss the habit of parliamentarians to code switch between English and Swahili, making it impossible for the layman to fully understand what is being discussed. After interviews with parliamentarians the researchers concluded that section 12 of the parliament's regulation of 1965 which states that '*mazungumzo katika Bunge yataendeshwa kwa lugha ya Kiwahili au ya Kiingereza*' (Mwansoko and Tumbo-Masabo, 1996:11), 'discussions in parliament will be conducted either in Swahili or in English' allows parliamentarians to use either language. Since the regulation does not forbid one to code switch, the parliamentarians can decide to use either of the languages or to code switch.²⁷ This study is yet another proof of the fact that some form of language uniformity is needed in Tanzania.

Ruhumbika presented two papers on Swahili translation at the International Conferences of Swahili writers in Dar es Salaam. The first conference took place from 16th September to 7th October 1978 and the second one from 12th to 24th May 1980. In the first conference Ruhumbika presented "*Tafsiri za maandishi ya kigeni kwa Kiswahili*", which means, 'the translation of foreign writings in Swahili'. This paper was published in 1983 and had its second edition published in 2003. In this paper he looks at translation as a medium of developing the Swahili language. Ruhumbika starts with a discussion on translating academic works. Swahili is used as the medium of instruction in primary schools in Tanzania but is a subject from secondary school right through to higher education. The shift from learning in

²⁷ It seems that code switching is also an elitist attitude in Tanzania although it has to be noted that to many parliamentarians Swahili is a second language.

Swahili and then in English has various debatable effects. Tanzania aims to use Swahili throughout the education system. There has thus always been a need to translate academic works. Ruhumbika offers a brief analysis of literary translation, stressing the importance for a translator to be aware of the audience and culture that he is translating into. Ruhumbika ends his paper calling on the importance of translation in the growth of Swahili language. In his second paper, "*Tafsiri za kigeni katika ukuzaji wa fasihi ya Kiswahili*", 'Foreign translations in the growth of Swahili literature', which was also published in 1983 prior to having its second edition published in 2003, Ruhumbika discusses the importance of translation in the development of Swahili literature. Ruhumbika realizes that for a nationalist Tanzanian who wishes to cleanse the ills of colonialism, translating foreign literature may seem traitorous; but one has to realize that foreign literature that discusses the exploited class, that comes from other colonized peoples and that comes from states that have similar political ideology as Tanzania is important. He therefore advocates for a domesticating translation strategy that not only familiarizes the translation product but also chooses texts whose themes are familiar to the Swahili. He comes to a rather obvious conclusion which states that translation is crucial for the growth and development of Swahili literature.

The other products of translation oriented conferences are the articles in Problems of Translation in Africa: Proceedings of the round table conference, FIT – UNESCO; a conference that was held at the university of Dar es Salaam from the 28th to the 30th August 1989. The compilation includes a number of papers that deal with Swahili translation. It offers a diversity of opinions on Swahili translations. Kihore's "Linguistics and Translation from and into African languages" starts with a discussion of translation theories in relation to linguistics before moving on to structural differences between languages. The researcher argues that sometimes

translators tend to use the structure of the source language in the target language, for example, current Swahili sentences tend to use the word 'kwamba' as the equivalence of 'that' whereas according to him, the term is not the acceptable practice. He argues that 'the most widely quoted example of structural borrowing in Kiswahili is that of the clause with the complementizer that as in English 'that'. Many Kiswahili works now show constructions with topicalized *kwamba*...against the acceptable practice' (Kihore, 1989:51). Unfortunately the latter does not offer the acceptable practice. This may be because *kwamba* is embedded in Swahili constructions and is widely used by everyone, even those who do not speak English. Thus I would say '*alisema kwamba ni kosa*' to mean 'he said that it's wrong'. The correct construction would not have included the word *kwamba*. Although Kihore hopes that as languages develop and full details of their aspects become known, such problems will be overcome; that is doubtful especially in today's globalized world.

Khamisi's "Syntactic strategies in Translation" offers some examples of how the source language is sometimes changed and modified so as to achieve a viable translation. Bwenge's "Reflections on the translator's (bilingual) dictionaries" discusses the theoretical and practical aspects of a translator's dictionary. The suggestion is that there should be a Swahili dictionary that will have a head-word, its translation, the equivalent and then the distinction between them which is the discriminator followed by some examples. Mwansoko's "The dissemination of technical terms as a means of facilitating translation" discusses the importance of translating academic works in Tanzania but points out that for this task to be done, it is necessary to have sufficient standard Swahili technical terminologies. Byarugaba's "The Tanzania journalist: the unrecognized translator" is about the 'plight' of reporting in Tanzania where it is compulsory for a journalist to be a translator as well as a journalist. At the same time the journalist is the 'unrecognized translator' who

doesn't even have the correct tools for the job such as dictionaries and encyclopaedias. Batibo's "Correctness and incorrectness in Swahili translation" tries to point out some of the problems that Swahili translators face and how these affect the translated work. Reasons for incorrect translations are given including alterations of the sentence structure, writer's background and culture. Batibo concludes that the translator has to decide whether they will align their work towards the source language or the target language.

2.6 Summary

At this juncture, it is evident that most of the few studies on Swahili translation that have been undertaken are prescriptive in nature and have been concerned with general themes as opposed to any specific aspect of translation. Although there are a handful of studies that have offered commentaries on different translations, none of them have conducted concrete research on the norms of Swahili translation. In this respect, the current study will be a departure from the norm and should offer new insight into the Swahili translation system.

In the next chapters an analysis of the selected translations will be carried out. I will proceed firmly with the argument that 'translated works do correlate in two ways: in the way that they are selected and in the way they adopt specific norms, behaviours and policies which are a result of their relations with the home co-systems' (Even-Zohar, 1978: 118). These relations will determine the position of Swahili translations in the Swahili polysystem, the strategies and decisions undertaken by translators and in the final analysis, the norms of Swahili translations.

3. CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1 Background Information: Brief Overview of Methodology

In his ground breaking work on Descriptive Translation Studies Toury (1995) advocates for translation that is empirical. He cites Carl Hempel's (1952) discussion on 'the fundamentals of concept formation in empirical science' which points out that empirical science,

has two major objectives: to describe particular phenomena in the world of our experience and to establish general principles by means of which they can be explained and predicted. The explanatory and predictive principles of a scientific discipline are stated in its hypothetical generalizations and its theories; they characterize general patterns or regularities to which the individual phenomena conform and by virtue of which their occurrence can be systematically anticipated (Hempel, 1952: 1, *in* Toury 1995: 9).

Toury (1995) then argues that translation, especially Descriptive Translation Studies is empirical since its main aim is the description of the translation phenomenon. In analyzing this phenomenon, Toury presents Holmes' 'map'¹ introducing its split between Pure and Applied Translation Studies. The current study largely focuses on the Descriptive Translation Studies sub-division due to its characteristic of accounting for actual translation behaviour. While accounting for translation behaviour, it is assumed that there has been a source work which is being translated, this source work and the target work both fulfil some kind of need in their respective cultures. Since that translation is the product of a translator, the need is actually an interpretation of a given translator. In turn, the translator is a product of a given social group and the translator's output is determined by his/her socialization. Therefore, translations are determined by certain normative frameworks. In one way or another, these are bound to norms. As previously noted, since norms are acquired during an

¹ See chapter two.

individuals' socialization, they also imply sanctions which are actual or potential, also positive as well as negative. Should a translation not adhere to a society's norms, it runs the risk of being sanctioned; 'norms serve as criteria according to which actual instances of behaviour are evaluated' (Toury, 1995:55).

According to Toury (ibid, 65), there are two different kinds of sources that a scholar may engage into in order to distinguish the regularity of behaviour in translation. These are textual and extra-textual sources. Thus, in order to discern and unveil Swahili translation norms, it has been imperative to engage in both. Textual sources are the actual translations while extra-textual sources are the normative and critical formulations and comments from those involved in the act of translation. Hermans' (1996) points out that translation involves a network of active agents who can be individuals or groups with their preconceptions and interests which therefore makes the translation event quite complex. Also, the steps towards the production of translations presuppose choices, decisions, strategies, alternatives, aims and goals. It also presupposes power structures conditioning all these different agents. In turn, the power structures also have to make choices and decisions.

On this basis, it has been imperative to use research instruments such as interviews, so as to discern the extra-textual sources. These would reflect societal as well as institutional behaviour. Semi-structured and open-ended type of interviews were conducted with a limited number of respondents and the main objective was to enable me to elaborate clearly to the respondents and get suitable feedback. I was able to acquire an abundance of information from translators, academicians, elderly Swahili speakers, Swahili teachers, students, writers and poets with varied experiences on the subject² as well as publishing houses, Tanzania's Ministry of Education, Institute of Swahili Research (TUKI)³ located at the University of Dar es

² The various respondents who took part in this study are discussed in detail below.

³ Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili.

Salaam, Institute of Swahili and Foreign Languages (TAKILUKI)⁴ at the State University of Zanzibar. Similarly, although to a small degree open ended types of questionnaires were handed out to a small number of students so they could write down their input and have the chance to elaborate on their views.

One of the most important research instruments used in undertaking this study was documentation. This was initially done through collecting information from libraries and archives at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar Archives and Dar es Salaam archives amongst others where a good number of translated books have been preserved. Documentation has been extremely important since it provided the textual sources that enabled me to uncover translational behaviour of the Swahili polysystem.

Prior to delving into the data collection procedure that was undertaken, it is important at this juncture to explain albeit briefly, the history behind the production of textual sources in Tanzania. The introduction of a universal primary education in Tanzania has meant that there is a substantial market for school textbooks. In fact, the great majority of publishing distribution in Tanzania is targeted at the education sector. It has to be understood that when the state had the monopoly of the market, demand was defined by the state and it was the Ministry of Education that was the main market. According to Walter Bgoya⁵, the Ministry purchased the books, mainly from Tanzania Publishing House and stocked these at the ministerial central warehouse from where the books were distributed to schools by the Prime Minister's office. It is only now that steps are taken so that publishers can distribute to the country's districts before being made available to schools and the open market. There is therefore a close relationship between publishing and education and in turn these are directly linked to literacy.

⁴ Taasisi ya Kiswahili na Lugha za kigeni.

⁵ Interviewed in Dar es Salaam, 7th November 2006.

Tanzania is a country where books and reading cannot be enjoyed by most since literacy is still a problem. Interestingly, in an interview with Ikaweba Bunting (2007:68), Nyerere is quoted saying:

...we took over a country with 85% of its adult population illiterate. The British ruled us for 43 years. When they left, there were 2 trained engineers and 12 doctors. This is the country we inherited. When I stepped down, there was 91% literacy and nearly every child was in school. We trained thousands of engineers and doctors and teachers.

According to the United Nations Organization that deals with Education UNESCO,⁶ literacy rate⁷ in Tanzania had risen to 90.4% in 1986, which is the period immediately after Nyerere stepped down from his presidential post. In 1992 it dropped to 84% and by 1995 it had declined to 56.8%. According to the most recent statistics by UNESCO, literacy rate in Tanzania between year 2000 and 2005 stands at 69% while that for youths is 78.5%. Nyerere struggled to raise the literacy rate in Tanzania and during his presidency, it became increasingly clear that initial instruction in a mother tongue does improve one's performance. Swahili became the language by which Tanzanians expressed themselves while portraying their identities naturally. Unfortunately, it seems that the euphoria was not to last. State publishing houses faltered as did literacy.

Publishing plays a vital role in book production globally and especially so in a country like Tanzania where book policy impacts the country's politics, education, leisure and entertainment as well as the people's socio-cultural identity among other roles. This impacts translation directly since the process involved in the creation of Swahili translation is directly linked to various establishments including publishing.

⁶ From http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/SUB-SAHARAN_AFRICA/United_Republic_of_Tanzania/United_Republic_of_Tanzania.htm

⁷ In Swahili.

3.2 Publishing in Tanzania

The origin of the book as we know it in Tanzania today may be traced to European missionaries whose main interest was translation and dissemination of the Bible. To facilitate this, they set up translation facilities and printing establishments in the Kipalapala seminary in Tabora and the Peramiho seminary in Songea. These centres were important not only for Catholics but other Swahili speakers who also published regular newspapers such as 'Kiongozi' and 'Lengo'.⁸ A number of educational books were also published by these printing centres, the most famous being *Safari za Bulicheka* (The travels of Bulicheka).⁹ Similarly, the Anglican Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) which was based in Zanzibar had similar facilities on the isles.

It needs to be noted that, at the advent of publishing in Tanzania, publishing and printing were one and the same (Mulokozi, 1999). In Tanzania, printing as a form of publishing developed in the eighteenth century (Ohly, 1985:470) when the bulk of what was produced was court poetry which was largely Islamic. On the other hand, according to Tanzania's directory entry compiled by the current chair of Tanzania Library Association in The Book Chain in Anglophone Africa, 'Publishing in Tanzania is considered to have begun in 1948 when the East African Literature Bureau (EALB) was established by the British colonial administration. This was followed by the establishment of the East African Publishing House (EAPH) in 1965' (Mcharazo, 2002).

Whether publishing started in 1948 or the 18th Century is open for debate although it cannot be denied that Christian missionary activities in Tanzania and East Africa in general included alphabetization and book printing. Missionaries and the

⁸ Interview with Dr Georgios Hadjivayanis, March 2008, London.

⁹ Published by T. M. P. Tabora, Tanzania, year of publication unavailable.

colonial government were also involved in mass media production and dissemination including the introduction of Swahili newspapers, magazines and periodicals. After independence, local publishers began to publish and promote their own Swahili language literature that was inclined towards the ideals of nation-building.

An insight into the state of publishing in Tanzania is offered by various scholars including Mcharazo and Professor Mulokozi (1999) of the Institute of Swahili Research (TUKI) at the University of Dar es Salaam. Professor Mulokozi analyzes the technical and political problems that have bedevilled African publishing. These problems include poor writing skills, copyright problems, issues related to distribution as well as Tanzania's state confinement and censorship policies. According to Mulokozi (1999:17), after independence, Tanzania, like many other African governments realized that multinational publishers held the power to publishing and therefore set up government publishing houses such as the Tanzania Institute of Education, Tanzania Publishing House and the East African Publishing House in the 1970s. These were meant to supply the increasing need of primary and secondary school textbooks. However, by trying to cup all the profits and creating a monopoly in this area of publishing, the state also deprived local publishers of their single most important source of income and thus effectively caused the almost total collapse of local publishing industries.

In most developing economies, Tanzania included, the economics of publishing involves much more than the cost of producing a book. Literacy, reading cultures, government policies towards language and the book industry, copyright laws and regulations, the status of libraries and the market available for what is published all play an important role. Unfortunately there has been poor performance about which Altbach (1993, 1999) puts down to the effect of the economic crisis of the 1980s where a combination of low prices on the world market for African exports, the

international debt crisis, political instability, overpopulation and mismanagement played important roles in its decline. These economic problems restricted government spending for textbooks which then harmed the book industry. He points out that, ‘in Africa, books and other published materials are central to education and to development’ (Altbach, 1993:1).

The above mentioned quote is still pertinent in the case of Tanzania. The book distribution in Tanzania is extremely limited and sadly, among the setbacks to its development are basic issues such as poor roads and lack of reliable sources of electricity limiting the competence that has now become a basic need, particularly for the young. This lack of a functioning distribution infrastructure at times forces publishers to do the distribution themselves, which then drives up the prices of books (Mulokozi, 1999:29). Libraries experience the same setbacks as bookshops and so are often seriously badly stocked. Mulokozi reports the results of a survey he carried out in 1996 into the stockings of the Tanzania Library Services which has 38 branches throughout the country. He found out that in a period of five years they had only added five novels, five plays and ten poetry collections to their stock of Tanzanian creative literature (ibid, 28).

In my interview with one of the most established and famous Tanzania’s publishers, Walter Bgoya, it became evident that all the above mentioned issues directly affect translation which was seen as a luxury by parastatal publishers whose output was inconsistent to say the least. He advanced that, historically, an adequate capacity for printing existed for a number of years in Tanzania but Nyerere’s state monopoly policies meant that printing was confined to parastatal companies, one of which he was a Director – Tanzania Publishing House. The exclusion of private companies meant that there was no competition in the industry which led to carelessness in maintaining machinery which then led to decline in print quality. He

informed me that, for a number of years, Sida (Swedish international Development Cooperation Agency) subsidized publishing in the country by supplying printing materials such as paper.

Fortunately free market was introduced in the mid 1980's and which meant that a number of private publishing houses were opened. Walter Bgoya opened one as well which he named Mkuki na Nyota. Bgoya points out that there is now competition and better management of resources, although the industry is still plagued by financial and distribution constraints. This view was also shared by another publisher, Demere Kitunga. Both Publishers own book shops and in order to cut down on expenses, they opt to use soft covers instead of publishing hard copies. They advertise their books online, host exhibitions, book launching events and visit schools to market their materials. Demere has gone as far as opening a cafe that hosts regular reading events although the reality of the matter is that, apart from the elite, most Tanzanians still cannot afford to buy books. Reading is a luxury in Tanzania.¹⁰ Text-books have found a market from the educational sector through the government and NGOs simply because they are compulsory reading.

Similarly, none of the authors and translators that I interviewed could make a living from the meagre earnings that they receive from those who commission their work or those who publish it. This has been the case for some of the greatest Swahili authors including Shaaban Robert who is acclaimed to have established the foundation for the contemporary novel in Swahili. He worked as a clerk for many years. Nevertheless, he was vulnerable to exploitation by publishers and expressed these sentiments not only in his prose works but also, indirectly, in some of his fictional works, which can be read as critiques of colonialism (Encyclopedia of African Literature, 2009). He developed new narrative styles that were marked by

¹⁰ See chapter six.

density of description and reflective commentary on matters such as ethics and customs which gave his novels a didactic orientation similar to folk tales which he obviously understood well (ibid). This exploitation is also discussed by Mulokozi (1999) who presents Shaaban Robert's unique case as he was cruelly exploited by metropolitan publishers and points out that political and religious inspired censorship remains a major threat to the development of Swahili literature in East Africa (Mulokozi, 1999:35).

Mulokozi criticises the restrictive and censorship functions of the state-controlled press pointing out that writers in Tanzania have remained 'generally marginalized, despised, and swindled' whilst publishing remains trapped in a socio-economic milieu that imposes 'financial, infrastructural, cultural, and political obstacles' in its path (ibid, 37). In the final analysis, Mulokozi argues that what Tanzania needs is a coherent national book policy which 'should, ideally, be drafted by book sector stakeholders, possibly through the book councils, if they have been established. The draft should then be submitted to the government for approval and adoption' (ibid). One might also add that a coherent national language policy would also benefit the country and would work well, especially in regards to fighting problems such as the lack of a reading culture in Tanzania which are largely linked to infrastructure rather than cultural issues (Mulokozi, 1999).

3.3 Instruments of Data collection

The technique of data collection in this study is composed of a combination of three types of research instruments which were basically from written sources such as documentation to interviews and questionnaires. These sources were all important in different ways. For instance, it was imperative that I interview elders who had studied

translation since their thoughts on the matter are not in any written work, nor are translator's feelings on the choice of works that are translated.

3.3.1 Choice of the Study Area:

As it must have become clear through the course of the previous chapters, this study was carried out in Tanzania in view of the fact that it is a country where Swahili is the national language.¹¹ Similarly, Swahili translation was initiated in the area prior to colonial intervention. The locations for data collection were Tanzania's capital city, Dar es Salaam as well as the island of Zanzibar where Swahili is the vernacular language. The above locations house some specialized institutions which have a great impact on translation in Tanzania. Some of these institutions include TUKI (Institute of Swahili Research), TAKILUKI (Institute of Swahili and foreign languages), BAKITA (National Board of Swahili), University of Dar es Salaam and the State University of Zanzibar. There are also some state apparatuses including government offices such as the Ministry of Education and publishing houses such as Tanzania Publishing House and in the private sector one finds publishing houses such as Mkuki na nyota and E&D which all work towards the dissemination and development of Swahili in one way or another.

In addition, as a native of Zanzibar and having lived and studied in Dar es Salaam, I am familiar with the two regions. I therefore have a personal link with the area which has facilitated easier and convenient accessibility to respondents for interviews and questionnaire. It needs to be noted that I had not had previous contact with any of the institutions concerned since, after my A-levels in 1996, I left Tanzania to study abroad.¹²

¹¹ Swahili is an official language in Kenya, it is not the national language.

¹² Lesotho, France and the United Kingdom.

Dar es Salaam, which is composed of three districts, Kinondoni, Ilala and Temeke is the country's commercial centre. Zanzibar is made up of two islands, Unguja and Pemba and the principal town in Unguja is known as Zanzibar. This research refers to Zanzibar which is the town situated in the west of Unguja island (Unguja Magharibi).

The above mentioned area was chosen in view of the fact that Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar have served as educational centres for years and the Swahili dialect of Kiunguja (Zanzibar) is not only the standard Swahili dialect, but it is supposed to be dominant in writings as well as translations.

3.3.2 Written Sources

The most dominant of instrument in this study was the written sources. Written sources were vital in enabling the evaluation and reviewing of the credibility of the generated information since this type of source contains a vast amount of concrete data. It is also cost effective and its data is permanent. This research technique was used to refer to the relevant written pieces of work including documents, books, dissertations, journals, articles, and reviews. These are generally understood to 'contain the accumulated wisdom on which the research project should build, and also the latest cutting edge ideas which can shape the direction of the research' (Denscombe, 2005:212).

Written sources provided for the textual sources that led to the discerning of norms of Swahili translation. Since 'texts are primary products of norm-regulated behaviour, and can therefore be taken as immediate representations thereof' (Toury, 1995:65). Through the texts, I was able to analyse the selection of Swahili translated prose. The prose selection was done according to the role played by the particular translations and the role played by the given translators in the Tanzanian Swahili

polysystem. Similarly, readership of the books also played an extremely important role in selection. Two canonical prose translations which have been used in education as well as the informal sector for decades were selected. Juxtaposed to this was a novel that has just come into the Tanzanian Swahili literary polysystem scene.

The first canonical work, *Alfu Lela Ulela* (1929) has been a compulsory reading and part of the school syllabus since the inception of formal education during the colonial epoch across Tanzania. Similarly, *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) has been part of the immediate post-colonial syllabus and represents the prestige and ideals of nationhood that have been predominant since the 1960's. On the other hand, *Msako* (2004) is representative of modern reading; it is a book by a popular blogger addressed to a modern Swahili audience.

During the colonial era, Brenn¹³, who was also one of the main Swahili translators, undertook the translation of *Alfu lela ulela* (1929). Amongst others he has also translated *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929) and *Kisiwa chenye hazina* (1943). His collaborator, F Johnson¹⁴, the editor of *Alfu Lela Ulela* had also done various translations and compiled Madan's *Swahili – English Dictionary*. It is for this reason that I chose to analyse a collaboration of the two scholars. This work also happens to be one of a handful of translations in Swahili undertaken by two different translators operating in different epochs. Recently, Hassan Adam¹⁵ undertook the task of translating *The Nights*. Therefore the text has been an ideal choice for discerning norms of translating during the given periods. This is particularly so since an understanding of the translation norms that govern a polysystem is better understood through a comparative examination of several existing translations of the original, undertaken in different periods by various translators. It has also been quite ideal that all the given Swahili translators have used Burton's 1885 translation as their

¹³ Brenn was a famous lexicographer and translator in East Africa.

¹⁴ Frederick Johnson wrote the first Swahili dictionary and was a translator.

¹⁵ Hassan Adam translated the present version of 'Alfu lela ulela', he is a Swahili lecturer in Cologne.

main source text. This has facilitated the presentation of a commentary as well as perfect comparison of the given choices by the translators.

This study uses Brenn's two editions that were edited by Johnson. These are titled *Mazungumzo ya Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Eلفu na Moja*¹⁶ which is the 1929 edition that was later revised by Saidi in 1973 and Yahya in 1973 and 1974. The latter two revisions make up the revised edition which is titled *Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Eلفu na Moja*.¹⁷ Saidi's revised edition is titled *Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Eلفu na Moja*¹⁸ whereas Yahya adopted Brenn's title, *Mazungumzo ya Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Eلفu na Moja*. There is also Adam's recent translation, *Mazungumzo Kamilifu ya Alfu Lela ulela au siku elfu moja na Moja*¹⁹. All the titles differ from each other in one way or another. The only similarity that they all have is the Arabic wording *Alfu-Lela-Ulela*. The 1929 edition informs the reader that they will be witnessing a 'conversation', Adam's translation promises a 'complete narrative'. It could have been interesting to compare these with the original book written in Arabic but due to language limitations in understanding Arabic, I will make the comparisons with Burton's translation. Also included in this analysis is Haddawy's translation from Mahdi's (1984) due to the fact that it has been highly acclaimed by critics.

A thematic study of the tales will be used to dissect the strategies employed. It needs to be highlighted that, although the work is quite voluminous, to date, only three translations have so far been undertaken by Adam. Similarly, the 1929 edition has only included a limited number of tales. I have therefore highlighted the tales that exist in the 1929 translation, the edited version and the re-translation. Prior to grouping all the tales thematically, I read them thoroughly. I then identified different

¹⁶ Gloss: Conversations of *Alfu-Lela-Ulela* or the thousand and one days. All of these translations employed the word *siku* which means 'day' but is a term that encompasses day and night.

¹⁷ Gloss: *Alfu-Lela-Ulela* or the thousand and one days.

¹⁸ Gloss: *Alfu-Lela-Ulela* or the thousand and one days.

¹⁹ Gloss: Complete narrative of *Alfu-Lela-Ulela* or one thousand and one days.

themes with the intention of understanding their process of translation. Therefore, it is the different translator's tackling of the different themes that I identified which acted as the starting point for my case studies. Among the tales that have been included in this study are the frame story of King Shahriyar and his brother translated as *Mwanzo* in the 1929 Edition, *Sultani Shaharia* in the revised edition and *Sultan Shahriyar na sultan Shahzama* in Adam's translation. As the frame story, it was important to analyse this tale; similarly, it is an erotic tale, thus the rendering of this theme was of interest specifically because of the taboos that the Swahili have placed in regards to the erotic. Other tales that have been analysed include the first tale narrated to Shahriyar, "The tale of the trader and the Jinni", *Mfanyaji Biashara na Jini* in the 1929 Edition, *Kisa cha Mfanyi Biashara na Jini* in the revised edition and *Kisa cha Mfanyabiashara na Jini* in Adam's Translation. The issue of religion as it is presented by the translations is what interested me in this tale. Others are "The tale of the fisherman", *Mvuvi* in the 1929 edition, *Kisa cha Mvuvi* in the revised edition, *Kisa cha mvuvi na jini* in Adam's translation, also "The Barber's Tale of his Fifth Brother", *Nduguye Kinyozi wa Tano* in the 1929 Edition, *Kisa cha nduguye Kinyozi wa Tano* in the revised edition and *Kisa cha Al-Nacha, ndugu wa Tano wa kinyozi* in Adam's. I have also referred to some other tales including "Sindbad the Sailor's fifth journey" and "Sindbad the Sailor's seventh journey" together with 2The adventures of Kamarlzaman and Badoura". All these tales portray different themes including eroticism, religion, socio-political contexts and cultural issues. Thence through these themes, the language used and the presentation of culture were believed to be instrumental in discerning the decisions taken by translators. Some tales such as "The tale of the fisherman and the Jinni" are very popular and familiar to the Swahili. For instance, an adaptation of the tale of the fisherman features as one of the tales in *Hekaya za Abunuwasi* (1935). Similarly, the character Al Nacha is one of the most

popular characters among the Swahili and various versions of his day dreaming are orally recounted in the society.

The status of *The Nights* within the Swahili Polysystem makes its choice apparent. It has been claimed that the tales from the *Arabian Nights* had circulated in the Swahili world as oral translations during the pre-colonial period before some were adapted and written down for circulation as original Swahili tales while others were brought in as translation.²⁰ In the colonial period, although the tales were supposed to play a complementary role and were hence subordinated to European literature, nevertheless this Swahili translation was part of the primary education syllabus and it played a primordial role in the creation of Swahili writers. For instance, one of the greatest Swahili authors, Shaaban Robert, was greatly influenced by these stories and this is obvious in his writings.²¹ This will be discussed in-depth in the next chapter.

I chose Shakespeare's translation by Nyerere, *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) as a sample prose from the post-colonial era. During that period, Nyerere's²² *Ujamaa* was the ruling ideology and as such translation and literature in general in Tanzania tended to reflect this ideology. The question of whether the translation served the interests of *Ujamaa* ideology arose since following *Ujamaa*, African socialism, 'a merchant' is 'a capitalist' for he supposedly lives by exploiting the masses. Nyerere's translation of the title of this classic is reflective of the ideology that exposes capitalism and its lust for profit because 'Merchant of Venice' is translated in the plural as the 'Capitalists of Venice'. At this point, it is unclear whether this ideology is only apparent in the title or whether it extends into the contents. Nevertheless, I expect this work to offer a broad view of the norms used during that period. Examples from other translations of that time will also be drawn upon with the view of uncovering whether they served the interests of *Ujamaa* or not.

²⁰ See Geider (2004).

²¹ Good examples are *Adili na Nduguze* (1952) and *Kusadikika* (1951).

²² Nyerere was the first president of Tanzania, he is regarded as the father of the nation.

From the modern period, *Msako* (2004), which is a translation by Deogratius Simba from Naguib Mahfoudh's novel, *Al-Tariq* (1964), *The Search* (1991) was selected. Simba is one of the few respected Swahili bloggers whose blog is frequented by the young as they circulate the virtual world of the internet. This novel's thrilling story coupled with its sensually written style has made it a book of choice for many. This has provided a sample of recent norms of translating with a new perspective in Tanzania after the demise of *Ujamaa* ideology. This will be reflected through the modern translation of *Msako* (2004).

Unarguably, despite there being a small numbers of Swahili translations, three translation texts cannot claim to be completely representative of Swahili translated literature in Tanzania. Therefore, it has been imperative that in my analysis I include a number of other translations that were undertaken during the three different epochs. These should offer a more or less cross-sectioned representation of Swahili translated literature. They include *Barua Ndefu kama hii* (1980), *Wimbo wa Lawino* (1975), *Mfalme Edipode* (1971), *Tufani* (1969), *Kisiwa cha hazina* (1943), *Elisi katika Nchi ya Ajabu* (1940), *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969) and some children's translation literature such as *Sinderella* (2003), *Binti Mfalme na Chura* (2003) and *Ndoto ya Upendo* (2004). One has to remember that, although a number of translations have been undertaken into Swahili, nevertheless, Swahili prose system has not accumulated a large amount of titles. Numerically, only a few prose translations have been undertaken.

Toury (1995:102) offers stages that make up a methodological exercise that a researcher may use. With the view that translations are realities in the target culture, such stages address questions of *significance* and *acceptability* followed by *shifts* and *translation relationships* before attempting some *generalizations* and finally 'possible

implications of a descriptive-explanatory study'.²³ This study will incorporate all these stages. In the case of Simba's translation, for instance, significance of the work is looked at, bearing in mind that it is a translation of a modern blogger addressing the youth. Its acceptability as opposed to its possible adequacy is reviewed. The translation shifts, cultural and linguistic issues together with the translation relationships become clear through a comparative study of the choices that Simba made vis-à-vis the source text. Toury (1995:56-57) explains that the occurrence of shifts is a true universal of translation as translation is a kind of activity that inevitably involves at least two languages and their cultural traditions. The next stage is the generalization that also include other texts from the period when *Msako* (2004) was translated, all of it this is connected to the Swahili culture. Lastly, the implications for carrying out the particular descriptive – comparative – explanatory research are included.

3.3.3 Interviews

As a method of inquiry which involves direct contact between the respondents and the researcher, interviews were vital during the data collection process. All interviews were carried out using both English and Swahili languages and there was a lot of code-switching during the course of the meetings. As an extra-textual method, the importance of interviews is twofold. In the first instance, it is a method of choice for those who wish to collect data that is based on experiences and feelings, amongst other things where 'the nature of emotions, experiences and feelings is such that they need to be explored rather than simply reported in a word or two' (Denscombe, 2005:165). Since this was my general feeling especially in regard to translators and other professionals in the field, interviews had to be inculcated.

²³ Italics from original (Toury, 1995:102).

Again, it is the specific interviews with those who directly produce translations that plays a vital role in bringing out explanations that may otherwise not be available if one simply looked at translations. In his 'Papers in Culture Research',²⁴ Even-Zohar discusses six elements involved in the literary system. The first of these are producers whose,

common denominator of all manifestations of being a producer in culture is being in a mode of activating a product, in contradistinction to being in a mode of deciphering, or "understanding," the meaning /function of a product. The competence and know-how for producing is indispensable for any person in a culture, but the degree of competence, as well as the willingness to deviate from accepted repertoire, greatly vary (Even- Zohar, 2005:28).

Producers are subordinated to the rules of the polysystem in which they produce. They are both a conditioning and a conditioned force and can be organized in groups and as such be part of the 'institution' and the 'market' which are also elements involved in a literary system.

The 'institution' which has been mentioned above is described as 'the aggregate of factors involved with the maintenance of literature as a socio-cultural activity' (ibid, 30). It governs the norms that make out what is in the centre and the periphery of the system and it consists of many elements as diverse as critics, publishing houses, periodicals, clubs, government bodies, educational institutions etc. All these groups try to influence the system and as such enforce their preferences.

The 'market' is 'the aggregate of factors involved with the selling and buying of literary products and with the promotion of types of consumption' (ibid, 31). Even-Zohar stresses that without a market, a literary system cannot exist, because it is the 'socio-cultural space' where literary activities can 'gain ground' (ibid). The other elements are 'consumers' who make up the public and not only consume texts but also the socio-cultural function of these texts and the 'repertoire' which is of primary

²⁴ <http://www.tau.ac.il/~itamarez/works/books/EZ-CR-2005.pdf>

importance since it ‘designates the aggregate of rules and materials which govern both the making and handling, or production and consumption, of any given product’ (ibid, 15). Culture is therefore part of a repertoire. All these are elements in a polysystem and have the aim of producing a ‘product’ which is not necessarily a text but ‘any outcome of any activity’ (ibid, 25). In this case, the products are the Swahili translation texts.

So as to receive first hand information from all these players, the interview method offered the best possible option. There are scholars who actually argue that elements such as the producers and the institution for instance, may have more to offer than the study of products alone. For instance, Anthony Pym argues that ‘once one starts to look at translators rather than translations, several realizations are likely to dawn’ (Pym, 2000). Pym advocates a research methodology whereby the translators are studied before the text. He points out that when one does this, they quickly realise that very little about translators is known, most translators tend to find ‘fame wearing a different hat’ (ibid). Piecing together their biographical elements means that we would be using

...a method that would have us look at translations first and receiving (poly) systems second. Such a method obliges us to move from the several thousand shifts embodied in a translation fragment (wherein many a descriptive scholar already becomes lost) and confront the whole churning dynamic of a culture, supposedly in search of some kind of explanation for the translation’ (Pym, 2000).

In regards to this study, I was able to interview Deogratius Simba who translated *Msako* and Hassan Adam who translated *Alfu Lela Ulela*. I was also able to interview a number of key players whose role and mediation in the production of translations was vital. This has been especially important because of the state of the book in Tanzania and the status and role of languages, specifically Swahili and

English in the educational field.²⁵ This method certainly offered ‘data based on privileged information’ (Denscombe, 2005:165). In retrospect, I believe that I would not have gathered all the historical and statistical information that I did had I not discussed with respondents. For example, I would not have gotten the insight on the issue of Nyerere’s commissioning of the publication of *The Report of the South Commission* (1990) had I not met up with Mr Isidor Karugendo from Tanzania Publishing House. Isidor Karugendo, Director of Tanzania Publishing House explained to me that, publishing houses were interested in translations but could not afford to publish what would not sell. He gave me a concrete example of *The Report of the South Commission* (1990) which is discussed below, provides a general introduction to the problems of development as reviewed by the South Commission that was established in 1987. It explains the situation of the developing countries during the 1980s when the economy in the less developed countries was extremely vulnerable. Julius Nyerere who was then the Chairman commissioned the report to be translated by Paul Sozigwa. Finding the contents of the report relevant to the Swahili and believing that it would sell very well, he commissioned 10, 000 copies to be published. Through their ‘rule of the thumb,’²⁶ Tanzania Publishing House felt that the translation would not sell and thus demanded that Nyerere find a market for them prior to publishing. Luckily, UNDP, the United Nations Development Programme, ordered 3000 copies and as such Tanzania Publishing house decided to publish only 5,000 copies initially. As predicted, out of the remaining 2000 copies the Tanzania Publishing House were able to sell only ten. To date, 1990 copies remain in their stores unsold, gathering dust.

Interestingly, by the time Nyerere commissioned the work, it had been translated into 13 languages and was judged relevant to the developing world and

²⁵ See chapter one.

²⁶ In Mr Karugendo’s words, interviewed at Tanzania Publishing house, Dar es Salaam, 14th July 2004.

Nyerere believed that the Swahili would embrace the criticisms on the model of development that the developed world was forcing on the developing world.

Unfortunately, according to Isidor Karugendo, the reason for the failure to sell this translation lay in the fact that the few elites who would have been interested to buy such a work preferred to read it in English.

The publishing houses in Tanzania cannot compete with world publishers whose outputs interest the elite. The small size of this elite and the specificity of their needs makes it difficult for the local publishing houses. This is made more concrete by the fact that this elite can purchase what it needs from major online sellers such as Amazon.com. Alternatively they can place orders at elitist book shops such as ‘plume d’or’ in Dar es Salaam which sells its books using foreign currency or the exchange rate of the day. Thus, Tanzanian publishers largely produce text books depending on audience demand and currently children’s books form the majority of what is published since the output of patrons is strongly intertwined with audience demand.

Similarly, with reference to Tanzania’s poor reading culture, it was also felt that key players such as publishers, administrators, retired politicians amongst others would be able to give information that may not be available in written form. With reference to descriptive translation methodology, this technique provided the extra-textual materials derived from statements made by translators, reviewers, publishers, editors and various other individuals involved in or connected with translation. However, ‘normative pronouncements...are merely by products of the existence and activity of norms’ (Toury 1995:65).

Interviews can of course be partial and biased especially since they emanate from interested parties. They could sometimes lean towards propaganda and persuasion.²⁷ Although this caution could not be ignored, it has not been possible for

²⁷ See Toury (1995).

me to omit or discard whatever I was informed since these normative pronouncements should not be seen as accidental but rather as reflecting the cultural constellation within which and for whose purpose the formulations were produced. It has therefore been imperative that the information gathered from respondents be compared to each other and to the given works, so as to have a unified informed analysis. I also had to rely on my personal knowledge of Tanzania and its people so as to weigh out what they reported. I was then able to question their political and cultural allegiance and at times, confront them with these issues during the interviews. This familiarity is also one of the reasons that made me select Tanzania to conduct my research and not any other Swahili speaking country.

I used both semi-structured and structured interviews. Sample questions are attached in the Appendix. In many instances, the questions were of open ended nature. This method was chosen because of its flexibility since I could easily clarify the questions that were not understood by the respondents and also it gave me the opportunity to pursue further questions as prompted by the respondent while giving way to supplementary and rejoinder questions. It was also possible to cross check the validity of the responses provided by the respondents.

Interviews were time consuming but provided crucial first hand and detailed information. Following this, only a given number of people were chosen for interviews and this was motivated by the need for detailed information from the respondents. Questions were asked orally and responses were recorded in an audio tape while simultaneously, I also took field notes in a note book. The recorded responses were later on transcribed. I have also attached a list of respondents who were included in this study.

3.3.3.1 The Respondents

The target group to be interviewed comprised of professionals in the translation field and those who came into contact with translations such as students and the general reading audience. The reading audience was included due to the fact that although they are not professionals in the field, they do possess the cultural know how and some of them, for instance the elders, were educated during the colonial period when what was Swahili literature was basically Swahili translations from English. Their responses as the intended audience for the translations was therefore vital to this study. This variation in the choice of respondents added to the richness in the supply of a variety of information. Professionals in translation included those who had received special training or had studied translation, practising translators and those who work with translations including teachers and lecturers. From them I hoped to uncover their social profiles, their financial and economic situation such as who pays the translators, who commissions or funds the publishing houses, if they are commissioned and what discourses are preferred. Government officials and publishers were also included in the sample on the assumption that they would supply me with official information that may help me piece together the translation situation in Tanzania.

The chosen respondents may be viewed as representative of a small and non-systematic sample of readers but it needs to be understood that it was not possible to collect data from all those who read translations. I therefore included the aspect of generational gap on the basis of random sampling with a purposeful element. This sample included people I came in contact with and who agreed to be interviewed, I was then able to get some people from the older generation whom as previously noted, had read the given translations, specifically during the colonial era. One of these was the first woman to have acquired a Degree outside Tanzania. Respondents

included the current younger generation of students who both study translations or simply read them for pleasure but were expected to offer a recent perspective on translations. They were chosen because they attend the main state language special school, Zanaki High School. This sampling was important since it provided different perceptions from different epochs. The main respondents included:

Mr Deogratius Simba - translator of *Msako* (2004).

Mr Hassan Adam - translator of *Alfu lela ulela* (2004).

Lecturers from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM):

Prof M.M. Mulokozi,

Prof Issa Shivji,

Prof Saida Yahya-Othman,

Prof Karim Hirji,

Prof Haroub Othman (currently deceased).

Lecturers from State University of Zanzibar (SUZA):

Mr Idris Swaleh,

Prof Mohamed Abdallah (Babu),

Bi Asha Bilal.

Ministry of Education and Culture:

Dr Hermans Mwansoko.

Publishing Houses:

Tanzania Publishing house: Mr Isidor Karugendo, Mr Saify Kiango (translator).

Mkuki na Nyota: Mr Walter Bgoya, Mr Deogratius Simba,

E & D Publishing: Ms Demere Kitunga.

Research Institutions :

TUKI – Institute of Swahili at the University of Dar es Salaam,

TAKILUKI – Institute of Swahili and foreign languages at the State University of Zanzibar,

BAKITA this is the National Council for Swahili which is the body that certifies all translations in Tanzania. Freelance translators have to have their work certified and pay a small sum for this.

The Audience:

Elders (civil servants, educationalists, retired):

These have included Bi. Rabia Hamdani, Salha H. Hamdani, Maalim Idris Saleh, Bi Kidude, Bi Mariam Hamdani, Dr Georgios Hadjivayanis, Hon Zakia Meghji.

Students (from Zanaki High School): I chose this School as it is a special language school, and it is also the school where I did my A-levels. I was thus familiar with some of the teachers and also the head mistress who fondly remembered me as one of the school prefects.

One student from the University of Dar es Salaam: Ms Pendo Malangwa who was writing her MA dissertation on the problems of translating into Swahili. She gave special emphasis to Nyerere's translation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (1967).

3.3.4 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were less time consuming and enabled me to acquire responses from a large number of informants within a short time. Some responses did not reflect the questions and some respondents did not answer some questions. Nevertheless, this was taken into consideration and questionnaires were supplied to thirty students majoring in 'KLF – Kiswahili Language and Literature (English and French) from Zanaki High School in Dar es Salaam. Zanaki High School is the only state owned

specialist language school where students are expected to be very familiar with translations.

The questionnaire was similar to the questions posited to respondents during interviews except that interviews also included some questions specific to the respondent's expected knowledge. For example, the students and translators were offered four sentences requiring them to render in translation. An attachment of both is attached (see Appendix 2 and 4 respectively)

The questionnaire was intended to provide respondents with both freedom to express their views and also to facilitate analysis. It is worth noting that the questionnaire was thoroughly examined and cross checked by both myself and my supervisor at the time (Dr Farouk Topan). I personally administered the questionnaire with care and made sure that all the respondents were adequately informed. Also given the fact that responses were consistent, it showed that the questionnaire was understood.

The questionnaire was designed to get information from the respondents on various issues including:

- Personal history: level of education, experience / study of translation and the languages that they spoke and worked with.
- Strategies and approaches used or encountered in translation.
- General problems and factors concerning translation especially into Swahili.
- Patrons and the issue of commissioning of translations.
- Perceived status of translation and its trend.

3.4 Plans for Data Analysis and Interpretation

The bulk of data analysis was carried out through a comparative study of the Swahili translation and the texts that were used as source texts. It needs to be re-asserted that, in Chapter 3 of his monograph *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, Toury discusses the methodology of Descriptive Translation Studies arguing that translation study begins with comparison. For this study too, it was key to compare and analyse translations. In Toury's opinion, there are three kinds of comparisons. The first type is the comparison of different versions translated from the same source language during the same period. This type is the easiest comparative study since few variables are involved. It 'involves various parallel translations in one language, which came into being at one point in time' (Toury, 1995:72). This kind of comparison would enable a researcher to compare readability for instance among other concepts.

The second type is the comparison of different versions translated from the same source language during different periods. A researcher would then 'compare different phases of the emergence of a single translation, trying to trace at least the way individual translators waver between different concepts of acceptability as they move along' (ibid, 73). A good example of this kind in the Swahili Polysystem is the translation of *The Nights* which has been translated by different translators in different epochs. Although Brenn has not indicated his source text, careful examination of his tales and the flow in his translation indicates that Burton's (1885) translation was used as his source in translating *Alfu Lela Ulela*. In addition to Burton's text, Adam also used a German translation by Wiehl. He informed me of this when I interviewed him although he noted that his usage of Wiehl was largely for comparative purposes. For my personal comparative purposes, I have also used Mahdi 's (1984) translation by Haddawy (1990) since it has been claimed to be the closest work to the Syrian original manuscript found at the Bibliotheque Nationale in

Paris. Thus, I have discerned the given norms of Swahili translation by using a combination of both comparative and developmental logic.

The third type of translation comparison is that of the different versions translated from different source languages during different or the same period. Toury explains that this type of comparison enables the researcher to distinguish what is universal and what is cultural or language specific. The use and appearance of phenomena such as repetitions, omissions and additions for instance may allow a researcher to establish general laws of translation behaviour.²⁸

Since most Swahili translations have not benefitted from having more than one translation, a combination of these three types of comparisons has been used. This study has compared Source texts in English with the Swahili target translations. It must be pointed out that, at times the source texts were themselves translations; as is the case for Simba's translation. I have also included other translations that were undertaken at the time when most of these translations were done so as to see if there is any parallelism or trend in the strategies used by the translators.

The benefit of doing field work is particularly manifested in the richness provided by respondents in terms of attitudes, emotions and ideology. Cultural views and allegiances vividly lead towards the unveiling of the norms used in translations. The conceptual framework manifested itself in the data collected. This study sought to theorize data with specific theories of translation, the Polysystem theory together with Venuti's concepts of foreignizing and domesticating.

²⁸ Toury's translation laws are discussed in chapter two.

3.5 Analysis

The present study like any other is not without limitations and problems. I had to keep in mind Toury 's(1995) caution that in this kind of research, it is convenient to focus on isolated norms pertaining to well defined behavioural dimensions which made me aware that the field of translation is multi-dimensional. Spurred by the novelty of the topic and the fact that translation scholars have tended to look at 'the effect of the TL in a given cultural context, rather than on the process involved in the creation of that product and on the theory behind the creation' (Bassnett, 1996:42), I also strived to understand the process of translating into Swahili. The social profiles of the translators, the texts they had produced, the different allegiances that were unveiled in the course of the interviews and the in-depth look at all the discourses that they had produced, worked together in piecing the trends or norms of translation behaviour in Tanzania.

The aim of this study has been to understand the choices made by the translators and specifically the reasons behind these choices rather than to make grand pronouncements about the correctness of their choices. Our quest is to find the approaches and strategies or maybe lack of these, by the translators in question. This in turn will lead us to an understanding of the trend of Swahili translations and in that process, the norms that may have evolved over time.

During data collection, I was allowed a limited field work time in Tanzania but due to unforeseen circumstances including the unavailability of some of the respondents, it was necessary to make two trips to Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam. In the course of these trips it quickly became apparent that the declining literacy rate, lack of written sources of information on a number of subjects including funding for translations, book sales and reader response in regards to translation meant that I had to rely on a number of respondent's personal responses in my analysis. It is possible

that I might have been given information that was subjective, but this had to be endured as a limitation. Parallel to this was also the time limitation where, some respondents were not time conscious, leading to rescheduling of appointments at best. Despite this, I managed to gather crucial information necessary for the study to be accomplished. I was able to talk to translators, their audiences and those who make their work available to the public. Through interviews I was able to understand for instance that lack of funding in the publishing industry has meant that the majority of translators translate for personal reasons and their best chance in success is to have their work included in the education system which means that their work would then become marketable. Analysis of these translations was also heavily dependent on the translation texts which meant that written sources made up the bulk of my resources. This is evident in the following chapters where the data obtained from the field trips is presented, and analysis is drawn from the selection of translation samples.

4. CHAPTER FOUR

The Translation of *The Thousand and One Nights* during the Colonial and the Post-Colonial Periods

4.1 Background Information

The Thousand and One Nights, also known as the *Arabian Nights*, referred to in this study as *The Nights*, consists of romances, fables and fairy tales together with historical and comical tales. According to Irwin (1994:2), the work consists of ‘long heroic epics, wisdom literature, fables, cosmological fantasy, pornography, scatological jokes, mystical devotional tales and chronicles of low life, rhetorical debates and masses of poetry’. They are folk tales that have been collected for centuries from Persia, India, Arabia and Egypt among other countries; this is why there is no single known author or creator of the tales. They are nocturnally narrated by the protagonist, Shaherazade, daughter of the vizier, a ‘read and learned’ lady, to Shahriyar the Sultan before the break of dawn. No single tale is narrated on single nights, thus one finds that for instance some are framed within other tales. For intrigue and to preserve interest, the stories are cut off when the heroes are in grave situations – for instance when they are about to lose their lives or when in deep trouble although there are also instances when Shaherazade stops her narration in the middle of interesting and complex philosophical principles. Through this strategy, Shahriyar is held in suspense and his habit of marrying successive virgins each night only to kill the brides the next morning is put on hold and so is Shaherazade’s execution.

4.2 Synopsis

After ten years of absence, Shahriyar, one of the Indo- Persian Kings during the Sasanid dynasty, invites into his Kingdom his younger brother, Shahzaman, whom he had given the land of Samarkand to rule. Shahzaman sets off but on the first day of his journey, having set camp for the night, he realises that he needed to quickly return to his palace; he thenceforth returns. Once there he finds his wife in the arms of one of the cooks. Angry and betrayed, he kills them both and returns to camp as if nothing had happened. When the two brothers meet, their joy is boundless. Nevertheless, depressed at his wife's infidelity, Shahzaman descends into depression and starts to look sickly. He does not tell his brother of his ordeal. Shahriyar puts the dejection down to homesickness and plans a hunting trip to cheer him. The latter pleads not to go and remains at the palace. Left behind, he witnesses his brother's wife, the queen and her entourage having a sexual orgy. The queen's partner is a black slave. This means that his lot was better than his brother's. Thenceforth he soon starts eating and drinking and regains his old self. When his brother returns after ten days, the transformation is complete. The latter begs to know what had been amiss before his departure and after much prompting, Shahzaman reveals everything to him. Shahriyar refuses to accept his wife's infidelity at face value; he needs to witness everything with his own eyes. The brothers then set up a pretend hunt but in truth remain in the palace. Shahriyar is then able to witness the orgy. The calamity of it makes the two decide to roam the world to see if they can find one who would be greater than them and whose misfortune could be greater than theirs. They brace themselves for a long journey. No sooner had they set off than they come across a huge black jinn holding a chest that has steel locks. The two hide on a tree, petrified. The demon whose power is obviously greater than that of the two humans takes out a beautiful woman from the

chest and proceeds to sleep on her lap. He soon starts to snore. The woman sees the Kings on the tree and orders them to satisfy her sexual needs; she threatens to wake the demon, her husband, should they refuse to satisfy her. The two follow her orders and soon discover that, despite being locked in a chest with a number of locks, the woman had already slept with a hundred men including them (this number is different in various translations). Realising that the power and plight of the demon surpasses theirs, they decide to return to their respective homes. Once at his palace, Shahriyar orders the killing of his wife and slave girls before announcing that, to save himself from the cunning of women, he will marry a virgin every night and kill the bride the next morning. This is where Shaherazade, daughter of the vizier comes in. To save her people, she plans to tell the King different tales which would hold his curiosity. Her plan is for the promise of a sequel to the tales to delay her killing. She asks her father to present her to the King. The father is dismayed but after much persuasion the vizier does as she bids. Shaherazade had told her sister, Dinarzad that she would send for her and that once in the Kings chamber the sister should request for a tale. Once in the King's presence, Shaherazade begins to cry and tells the King that she wanted to bade her sister farewell. The sister is sent for and as instructed, Dinarzad asks Shaherazade to tell a tale to while away the night. Shaherazade asks the King's permission; Shahriyar acquiesces. And it is from thenceforth that Shaherazade's plan takes form and the promise of a sequel delays her execution for a thousand and one nights in which time Shaherazade is already mother to Shahriyar's children. In the end, Shahriyar repents of his original intention to behead her.

4.3 Historical Perspective of the Translation

The stories in *The Nights* derive from various ethnic origins including Indian, Arabic, Greek, Jewish, Persian and Turkish sources. Most are understood to have first

circulated orally before they were written down and were made to circulate in various copies. According to Haddawy (1990), Arab historians of the 10th century speak of a collection of these tales in their time. They refer to them as *The Thousand Tales / Nights* (translation from a Persian work *Hazar Afsan*) which Haddawy (1990) translates as ‘A thousand legends’. Haddawy continues to argue that, the tales were written down in a definite form in the second half of the 13th century and it is this copy which came to be reproduced for the archetype version. This version was lost but ‘its existence is clearly attested to by the remarkable similarities in substance, form and style among the various early copies’ (Haddawy, 1990: xii).

According to Haddawy (1990), the archetype gave way to two separate manuscripts of *The Nights*, the Syrian version, which has four existing manuscripts and the Egyptian version which has a ‘proliferation that produced an abundance of poisonous fruits that proved almost fatal to the original’ (ibid). By this, the latter means that the Syrian version has four versions of tales which are very close to each other. The first of these copies is at the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris divided into three volumes. On the other hand, the Egyptian manuscript gave way to various and varying copies of the tales. The versions have been modified, added to, deleted and paved the way to a work that has come to have tales from various ethnic origins instead of the original version which according to Haddawy (1990), was a ‘homogenous original, which was the clear expression of the life, culture and literary style of a single historical moment, namely, the Mamluk period’ (ibid).

The version of *The Nights* that came to the West and most parts of the World through translations derive from the Egyptian branch. Tales such as the story of ‘Sindbad’ and the story of ‘Aladdin and the Magic lamp’ are said to have been added on in the quest to have enough stories to fill up the thousand and one nights. An effect of this is visible in the Swahili translations where for instance, we find that the

seventh journey of Sindbad the sailor is completely different in Brenn's and Adam's translations.¹ In Brenn's translation, which was undertaken during the colonial period, Sindbad is enslaved and becomes a hunter for ivory. One day an elephant carries him to an elephant graveyard where he finds ivory in abundance. His Master is overjoyed at the discovery and sets him free. Sindbad returns home even wealthier. Adam's translation, which has been undertaken recently, situates Sindbad on the China Sea. His vessel is swept by winds and calms down near where the Prophet 'Suleiman bin Daud' was buried. There are terrible fish terrorising the waters of which Sindbad confronts one, the size of a mountain. The tale recounts his adventure in the hands of disbelievers who grow wings once a year. But in the end Sindbad returns home by the will of the Almighty. The differences in these two tales are the result of the additions and omissions that were done by different editors throughout history.

The repertoire of *The Nights* is composed of what most editors individually selected, compiled and labelled from varying sources. In consequence there is no definitive corpus of *The Nights* but rather a broad network of texts and an amalgam of types of stories.² The first printed edition of *The Nights* was published in Calcutta by the Fort William College in 1814 where the editor, a certain Shirawani edited as he pleased by deleting, adding and modifying. The same was done to the Breslau edition published by Maxmilian Habicht. One of the most interesting of the versions is the Bulaq edition of 1835, printed in the Bulaq suburb of Cairo and based on an Egyptian manuscript where the editor, Al-Sharqawi, amended as he pleased and in doing so came up with a complete version that filled the thousand and one nights; to accomplish this feat, he had to add tales, sub divide and interpolate the tales. The second Calcutta edition published by William Macnaughten between 1839 and 1842

¹ These will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

² See van Leeuwen (2002).

was also based on an Egyptian manuscript and was also ‘thoroughly edited’ and ‘completed’ (Haddawy, 1990: xiv).

The first translation of *The Nights* into a European Language was done into French by Antoine Galland from 1704 to 1717. Prior to this translation, Galland had written the *Bibliothèque Orientale*, an anthropological work about the customs and manners of the Arabs. Thus the translation was a continuation of what he saw as an anthropological thread. He used the 14th Century Syrian text and also incorporated other sources. His strategy was not one that aimed at a faithful translation but rather a translation appreciated by the French culture. His aim was ‘not to transcribe accurately the real texture of medieval Arab prose, as to rescue from it items which he judged would please the saloons of eighteenth century France’ (Irwin, 1994:19). He is criticized for adapting and not really translating the work because even the language style reflects high society French where the porter and the King are assigned a similar tone, despite their vast class differences. Galland censored the work, ‘besides excising most of the pornography, Galland also decided not to translate the poetry’ (ibid), since it could not meet the strict canons of French literary taste of the time. One of his strategies was to explain the items that were not familiar to his target audience. Despite the criticism, Galland established *The Nights* as a classic. His translation fuelled a lot of interest so that a number of translations and imitations were undertaken by various sources so as to fill the thirst that Europe had for these tales.

English translations of *The Nights* are based on these versions. Richard Burton (1885 – 86), whose work was used as the source text by both Swahili translators, enjoyed great success. He used the Bulaq, Breslau and the second Calcutta editions as his sources. Burton’s translation is often flamboyant. He seems to have an interest in words and often goes to extreme lengths to bring an idea across. An example that has

been given time and time again is that, whereas in the Arabic manuscript, during the orgy, Shahriyar's wife sleeps with a 'black slave', Burton adds a number of adjectives to bring this person to life by calling him a 'big slobbering blackamoor with rolling eyes which showed the whites...' (Vol 1, pg 6). And then he goes on to give a long annotated reference explaining the length of the private parts of black men claiming to have measured one in Somali-land. Edward Lane (1838-40) used the same versions as Burton but substituted the second Calcutta for the first. His translation was meant for all ages, therefore, 'he purgated or rewrote sections which he thought unsuitable for childish and virginal ears' (ibid, 25). John Payne (1901) used the Breslau and second Calcutta. His translation is a literary work and not an anthropological work. Thence it does not include the annotations present in previous translations of *The Nights*.

Critics have come to agree that the most recent Edition of *The Nights*, undertaken by Muhsin Mahdi (1984) from the 14th Century Syrian manuscript, is one of the best since the author,

fills lacunae, amends corruptions and elucidates obscurities; however he refrains from providing punctuation and diacritical marks or corrected spellings what emerges is a coherent and precise work of art that, unlike other versions, is like a restored icon or musical score, without the added layers of paint or distortions hence , as close to the original as possible (Haddawy, 1990:xv).

After their initial introduction to Europe, the tales were subsequently translated into most European and several non-European languages. One aspect that has to be noted is the fact that these translations often followed European ideas about the Arab world in particular, what can be referred to as the 'Orientalist' background of most of the given translators.

Reading *The Nights*, one finds that the social, cultural and political structure of the medieval Arabic society was roughly divided into the higher echelon which

was composed of the Sultan, vizier, princes, the wealthy merchants, and wealthy slave owners. These are the people who are the portrayal of power and are depicted as characters with awesome might, rulers with absolute power whose actions affect almost everyone. The second echelon was composed of medium and small size merchants, the clergy, philanthropists and professionals. The third and last echelon was composed of the marginalized such as slaves, prostitutes, beggars and burglars. People from all these classes would interact easily in *The Nights*. It was not only the kind of interaction between the women whose conspicuous consumption of silk, jewellery and essences made them interact with merchants who would travel to the four corners of the world to meet these given demands. It was also an interaction between the beggars and the prostitutes with a supreme ruler such as Harun al-Rashid who supposedly would walk around the town at night and his people would tell him fantastic tales about their lives.

Therefore we find that, the barber's tales are recounted to the King of China who then takes the barber to be among his companions. Of interest to this study is the tale of the Barber's fifth brother, Al Nacha. This is an interesting tale that touches on many aspects of the socio-cultural nature of the world in *The Nights*. It is one of the most popular of the tales in Swahili. The reason may be that most people can relate to the dream of becoming 'a lotto millionaire'. The poor, unemployed, those who can't make ends meet, the marginalized, those on the fringes of society, dream and aspire to become wealthy.

Al Nacha was a beggar who luckily inherited 100 dirham from his father. He bought glassware with his inheritance and went about selling it. He had sat down with a tray (this is a basket in the Swahili translation) of his ware in front of him and began to day dream as he dozed on and off. He dreamt that his sale would bring him profit. He would get 200 dirham from which he would again buy wares and sell and then by

and by he would end up extremely wealthy. He would then buy houses, acquire slaves, eunuchs and horses. He dreamt that he would eat and drink and also ask the vizier's daughter's hand in marriage just as would have done any wealthy merchant. If the latter refused he would force the matter. In his dream, he becomes proud and condescending, refusing gifts, should they be given to him by his in laws. On his wedding night he would dress in the finest and refuse to look at his wife who would change her attires trying to please him. He dreams that he would only look at his wife when begged to. Later his mother in law would beg him to take her virgin daughter who in turn would hand him a glass of wine, he would refuse it. She would then try to put it on his lips but Al Nacha would push her off. Then, as he was dreaming of pushing his wife away by kicking her, in reality, Al Nacha kicks off his tray of glassware. He is devastated and weeps in bitterness for hours. A wealthy lady, a philanthropist, passing by feels pity on him and asks one of her eunuchs to give him all he has on him. Al Nacha is given 500 dinars. He is overjoyed. But an old woman tricks him into going to her mistress' home, pretending that he could marry her mistress and be the head of a wealthy household. Once at that house, he is entertained by a beautiful woman before being beaten almost to death by a black slave and all his money taken away. Al Nacha survives the beatings and heals. In turn, he pretends to be a wealthy Persian trying to find a place to weigh his money. He tricks the old lady to take him to the house of horrors where he kills all except the young lady. The latter shows him where all the stolen money was kept and bids him get help to carry the treasure. When Al Nacha returns, he finds the house empty. Nevertheless a few things remain and he takes the lot. Next day, the governor's army comes to get him and take him to the governor. Al Nacha recounts to the latter all the adventures that had befallen him. The governor confiscates everything and for fear of the Sultan hearing anything sends Al Nacha off to exile. On his way to exile, thieves strip him of

everything but luckily his brother, the barber, hears of this and secretly brings him back to the city where he cares for him. This general depiction of a society that is corrupt would touch a cord in most of the developing world. Irwin (1994) describes that the cult of the criminal was given additional impetus because the judiciary and police were very unpopular. The police were corrupt and ‘arbitrary arrests, strippings, beatings and tortures inflicted by the police feature frequently in The Nights’ (Irwin, 1994:156).

The 1929 Edition of the Swahili translation has adapted the tale into a Swahili environment. Thus we are informed that Al Nacha acquires ‘*duka dogo lililo zuri, akakaa kitako mbele ya mlango wa duka lake...*’ (1929, Vol 2: 51), ‘a small shop that was beautiful, he sat in front of the door to his shop’. Al Nacha is also said to have a neighbouring trader, a tailor, who actually hears Al Nacha’s entire reverie and when Al Nacha kicks his basket, the tailor laughs out loud and tells him ‘*E, baa wee! Yakupasa ufe kwa haya: kwa kumtendea hivyo mkeo kijana ambaye hakukosa kitu? Huna budi kuwa wewe u mtu mbayaa...*’ (1929, Vol 2:191) this translates as ‘O, how evil! You should die of shame : doing all that to your wife while she has not done any wrong? You are without doubt evil...’

In both Burton’s and Lane’s translations, Al-Nascher puts his wares by a roadside. But Brenn’s Swahili translation adapts the setting to be Swahili. People tend to do business largely through shops or kiosks and there is camaraderie as well as rivalry from working next to each other. Typically, Al Nacha’s shop neighbours a tailor’s shop and one imagines that it is the latter who fills the curiosity of the passers by recounting to them what had befallen his neighbour. It is the re-presentation of these tales that interests this study.

4.4 *The Nights* in Swahili

It has to be remembered that, although various theories exist about the Swahili, their culture is historically a coming together of various cultures, although the most prominent being the African and the Oriental. It is an amalgamation of both. The most obvious of this integration can be seen through the Swahili vocabulary which has a large percentage of Arabic among other languages. Also not only does the Swahili poetry contain a large Arabic influence, but the language was first written using the Arabic script.³ It follows therefore that since ‘the world of *The Nights* also includes those African cultures that were Islamized centuries ago and that have remained in close contact with Arabic culture and literature ever since’ (Geider, 2004:245), the work is part and parcel of the Swahili culture. Furthermore ‘it is quite certain that the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights* and other Oriental stories reached the Swahili-speaking world by sea. When, how and where this happened remains unknown, as pre-colonial Swahili writers did not pay attention to folktales’ (ibid: 247). Nevertheless, although it is not known exactly when the tales were introduced to East Africa, ‘a certain influence of oral tradition may be assumed for the period of contact between the Arab world and East Africa since about 900 C.E’ (ibid). Keeping in mind that there was contact between these two worlds, and the fact that the written Arabic editions of *The Nights* were widely available in Cairo for instance since 1835 (the Bulaq edition). It is possible that the written version of *The Nights* reached the Swahili soon after their inception. This link is even more tightened by Sultan Seyyid Said’s move to Zanzibar in 1832 (Mazrui and Mazrui, 1995:35). It can be assumed that the literate and aristocracy together with immigrants who had moved to the region during that time must have influenced the situation especially since it is this same group of Arab immigrants which had a great impact on the

³ See Mazrui and Mazrui (1995:39) where the scholars argue that in 1905, Carl Meinhof, a German linguist proposed that a Roman script replace the Arabic as a solution for dis-islamizing the language.

Swahili lexicon and literature. This fact is acknowledged by post-colonial theorists's statements such as:

Under Arab rule, the feudal-slave exploitation of the indigenous people was rampant. Naturally, the ruling class, mainly Arabs, who held political power also controlled the dominant ideologies, culture, literature and other aspects of cultural and spiritual life (Mulokozi, 1974:132).

It is therefore only logical that 'it was probably during Arab rule that Arabic tales became dominant in oral prose among East African coastal towns...' (ibid, 134). As an example of the lives of some of the ruling class, Geider (2004) gives the example of Princess Salme, who was born and raised in Zanzibar as the daughter of Sultan Seyyid Said and a Circassian mother. In her autobiography, Princess Salme, using her German name, Emily Ruete, gives vivid accounts of the multicultural life in the palace of Zanzibar. Salme notes that although Arabic was the official language, there was a 'Babylonian mess' where people spoke Persian, Turkish, Circassian, Swahili, Nubian and Abyssinian.⁴ Geider (2004) asserts that one can only imagine the amount of stories and tales that these people came with. Keeping in mind that the other wealthy Arabs regarded the sultan as their model, these homes must have also had concubines, slaves and servants who all had their own tales. It is certain that *The Nights* must have featured in such surroundings.

This hypothesis is ascertained when one looks at the Swahili tales that were orally told by the Swahili to the Europeans in the nineteenth century. European influence was gaining significance in Swahili literature and the tales recounted by the Swahili to the Western scholars remain visibly close to their Arabic originals with just a few additions and omission and some adaptations to the Swahili environment. These stories include Edward Steere's *Swahili Tales* (1870), Lansdown's *Swahili Stories from Arab Sources* (1881) which show the connections, direct and indirect to

⁴ See Ruet (1989).

The Nights. The tales recounted to Edward Steere, a missionary for the Universities' Mission to Central Africa in Zanzibar from 1864 to 1882, are proof of this fact. Steere (1870) studied Swahili and was very interested in the language and its people since it was an important tool for his task of spreading the gospel. He compiled *Swahili Tales* (1870), a collection of 18 folktales narrated to him by six Zanzibaris. Steere (1870: 149–189) wrote that there was a connection to *The Nights* in at least three of the tales although the Swahili versions are abridged. According to the latter, 'The story of Mohammed the Languid,' is also in Lane (1838-1840)'s translation of *The Nights* as 'Aboo-Mohammad the Lazy'.⁵ What is interesting is that this tale was recounted to Steere by two different narrators. The first of these was Mohammed bin Abdallah and the second was 'another Mohammed, who unfortunately died when he had got as far as p. 180' (Steere 1870: ix). Steere had to resort to the initial narrator. According to Steere, the narration in both instances was done 'in the court dialect, which is more Arabic in its forms and vocabulary than the rest, and is characteristically represented by a strict translation of an Arab story'(ibid); what surprised Steere is the correspondence of wording to the Arabic original which was similar in both narrations. The tale in Swahili has been adapted and thus, for instance, the merchants in the tale fire their canons as did Zanzibar fishermen upon returning to dry land. This firing of canons was also done on important days such as on Eid and Maulid -the celebration of the birth of the prophet.

The other tales that also appear in *The Nights* are 'Hasseebu Kareem ed Deen and the King of the Snakes' (ibid) about which Steere announces that 'we have an Arabic manuscript in the Mission library at Zanzibar, containing the story of 'Hasseebu', but differing in many of the names and circumstances from the form

⁵ From Lane (1865), vol. 2, 362–380.

given in the Arabian Nights' (ibid, vi). The last tale that bears a connection to *The Nights* is 'The Cheat and the Porter'.

More evidence on the availability of the written form of *The Nights* is offered by Rollins (1983) and Geider (2004) who recount the following incident: in 1909 the German administration confiscated the private libraries of six Swahili political opponents. A German scholar Carl Becker undertook to register their given holdings. He found booklets with stories and tales and among the lot were well known Arab histories by al-Waqidi, ath-Thaalibi, ash-Sharqawi and Ibn Hajar amongst others. He also found 'single tales from *The Nights* such as the stories of Tawaddud, Ajîband Gharîb, and Hasan of Basra' (Becker 1968:51 in Geider, 2004:248). Although Becker neither specified which editions he saw, nor where they came from, an import of Arabic books from Cairo is generally indicated. 'There can be little doubt that the average intellectual nourishment of the literate Swahili included a great deal of Arabic writing during this period...' (Rollins, 1983:32). At any rate, this incidence acts as proof that tales from *The Nights* must have reached the East African coast not only by oral communication but also by way of Arabic books' (Geider 2004:248). Geider adds that this incident shows that it is possible that Arabic works reached East Africa soon after publication. Thus, written versions of *The Nights* were in the possession of some Swahili scholars before the colonization of the East African coast. Apart from the above, another example that shows the existence of these translations in oral form prior to the written form is the character of Abu Nuwas which is discussed below.

4.4.1 The Swahili Abunuwas

The tales of Abunuwas are canonical and occupy a central position in the Swahili polysystem. The stories appeared in the canonical edition of *Hekaya za Abunuwas na Hadithi Nyingine* (1935: 1–22). Interestingly, the collection ‘no doubt comes from *1001 Nights*, a work ...commonly found in Swahili libraries in Arabic during this period, yet, which in many forms no doubt could have also existed orally as well’ (Rollins, 1983:56). The Swahili Abunuwas (there is no space between the two words in the Swahili version) is a clever and cunning character in the Swahili literature. He is an

arbitrator who judges in favour of the poor against the rich and powerful, as a punisher of criminals, and sometimes as a trickster acting for his own sake. His power is based on intelligence and verbal wit and sometimes shows spiritual and mystic tendencies (Knappert 1970: 6).

In the Swahili tradition, Abunuwas always tries to prove what is absurd, for instance, in one of the tales, Abunuwas builds a two storey building and purposely places the stairs that lead to the upper floor on the outside of the building. He then sells the top floor flat to a rich man. After a while, he decides to sell off the ground floor and proposes this sale to the rich owner occupying the flat above. The rich man refuses to buy. Abunuwas tries to find another buyer without success. He then comes up with a cunning trick; he brings a number of workmen to the building in question and then calls out to the rich man upstairs:

Mimi nataka kuvunja nyumba yangu hii ya chini, wewe shikilia sana nyumba yako huko juu usije ukasema sikukuambia (ibid, 3)

I want to demolish my flat/house located below yours/downstairs; do hold on tight to your flat/house up there and don’t say that I didn’t warn you.

Presented with such a scheme, the rich man had no option but to purchase the entire house from Abunuwas.

Abunuwas's wit and cunning is extreme at times. For instance, he once borrowed a pot and returned it with a smaller one within. When the owner informed him that the smaller one was not his, Abunuwas relied that the neighbour's pot had given birth to the smaller pot. The second time Abunuwas went to borrow a pot the neighbour who had acquired a smaller pot previously promptly handed him one. This time, Abunuwas did not return the pot until the neighbour was forced to go claim it. It is then that Abunuwas informed him the pot had died. '*Yule akanena, shaba hufa? Abunuwas akasema, haikuzaa? Akanena ilizaa. Abunuwas akanena , kila kitu kinachozaa hatima yake hufa*' (ibid, 4) - (The latter said, copper dies? Abunuwas responded, didn't it give birth? He said yes it gave birth. Abunuwas said, everything that gives birth finally dies); and that was the end of it.

According to the cover of this work, these are 'Swahili stories told and written down by Africans' (1935). Nevertheless, scholars including Ryoga (1985) refer to this work as a translation. Aware of this Ohly (1981) explains in his notes that, 'the term 'translations' is doubtful' when referring to Abunuwas since 'tales from Arabian Nights or anecdotes about Abunuwas were well known. Some of them entered long ago the East African folklore as the Sungura kibunuwasi in Zigua' (Ohly, 1981:106).

Rollins (1983) talks of the existence of Swahili tales in the German language collected by Buttner (1894). These tales include '*Geschichten von Abunuwas*' and '*Geschichten von Mutanabbi*'. Mutanabbi was apparently also a famous poet named Abu at-Tayyib Ahmad ibn Husayn. In the introduction to the German tales, the reader is informed that they 'will find many of these stories like that of al-Mutanabbi and Abu Nuwas in his collection coming from written Arabic and Indian sources' (Buttner 1894:xi cited in Rollins, 1983:57).

What is intriguing about the tales of Abunuwas is their identity in the Swahili polysystem – it is debatable whether they are truly oral renderings of the Swahili or

simply translations. Their setting is foreign (mostly Baghdad) and among the stories are characters such as Harun Rashid who is the caliph in *The Nights*. Its resemblance to *The Nights* is not debatable; the protagonist's character derives from the personality of the historical Abu Nuwas,

The ninth-century poet, who was patronized by the Barmecid clan and later became the *nadim* of the caliph al-amin, was the greatest of the poets who celebrated both the joys of wine and the beauty of the boys who served that wine. Abu Nuwas also features in several of *The Nights* stories as the hero of a number of unedifying adventures, and several of his poems are inserted in the stories (Irwin, 1994:154-155).

Abu Nuwas al-Hasan ibn Hani al-Hakami was born in 760, in Al-Ahwaz, Khuzestan and he died in 815. He was a poet at the court of the Abbassid caliph of Baghdad, Harun al-Rashid (786-808). He was educated at Basra and Kufa. His first teacher was a poet named Waliba ibn al-Hubab who later took Abu Nuwas as his lover. Abu Nuwas wrote erotic and witty lyrics which often celebrated both the love of wine and boys.

In *The Nights*, Abu Nuwas is usually portrayed as a libertine character, inclined towards wine and youths. For instance, in Burton's tale of 'Abu Nuwas and the three youths' (Burton, 1894, vol 3: 31-35), Abu Nuwas cooks a rich feast of rare meats and the finest spices. Then he goes out, looking for someone to enjoy the meal with. He prays to God that one who befits the banquet and who would frolic with him would show up, then he comes upon three young men, fair and beardless, similar to the boys of paradise, all different from each other but alike in their beauty. He invites them to the feast. After eating, they ask him who is the most beautiful of them. He kisses and praises the first one for being hairless, the second one for the perfect mole on his cheek and kisses the third boy a dozen times saying his beauty would have made him drunk just by gazing at him. He then openly discloses that those who don't know boys know no joy! At that moment, the ruler- Caliph Rashid, is out and about

on his nocturnal prowls. He finds them being merry and does not stay with them, leaving as abruptly as he had appeared to them. The next day however, the Caliph orders Masrur the swordsman, to strip the poet of his clothes and shamefully parade him on all fours to the women's lodgings, to shame him for his homosexual inclination. While paraded, Abu Nuwas clowns around; the girls feel sorry for him and throw gold and jewels at him. Thence he returns to the Caliph's presence with treasures. Then a vizier asks Abu Nuwas what offence he had committed, Abu Nuwas replies that all he had done was to offer the Caliph a present of his best poetry, and the latter had given him the best of his garments. When the Caliph hears this, he laughs and gives him another bag of money.

This original Abu Nuwas who celebrates homosexual seductions could never have found any form of acceptability in the Swahili milieu. In the first instance one may argue that he has been adapted to the Swahili audience. Therefore, the commonality between the two is that, the Swahili Abunuwas is 'a familiar of the court of Harun al-Rashid' (Irwin, 1994:170) just like the real poet was; although obviously the Swahili would not recognize the 'poet famous above all for his verses in praise of wine (*khamriyyat*) and beautiful boys (*mudhakkarat*)' (ibid). The only constant between the Swahili Abunuwas and his originator is the fact that both are subject for teasing. The original was teased due to 'his sexual tastes' (ibid) but never vilified. The Swahili Abunuwas teases and at times is teased. For instance, he is seen as dim witted where, once he supposedly had a tooth problem and proceeded to a dentist who removed the bad tooth. Once home, his wife informed him that their neighbour had had the whole set of his teeth removed for the same price that he had paid to have one tooth removed. Abunuwas hurriedly returned to the dentist demanding that the latter remove all his teeth so he may get his money's worth!

With reference to the Descriptive Translation Studies, Abunuwas is a form of pseudo-translation. This means that it is a fictional translation. As characteristic of this type of fictitious translation, it has an ambiguous origin that does not refer back to any given source text.⁶ Abunuwas is obviously of foreign origin, and its resemblance to *The Nights* is striking. It must have reached the Swahili coast through oral translations and was then assimilated. In the same breath, what is most interesting is a fact that, while I was doing my research I came across various tales from many countries, one of these being the tales of Nasreddin Hodja. Hodja is Turkey's and most of the Islamic world's best-known trickster. His wit, droll trickery, anecdotes and ingenuity is legendary. Interestingly, these are also characteristics of the Swahili Abunuwas. And what is even most fascinating is the fact that, even their adventures and exploits are similar. Consider the following tale of Nasreddin Hodja who lived in the 13th century:

A neighbour comes to the gate of Mulla Nasreddin's yard. The Mulla goes out to meet him outside.
 'Would you mind, Mulla,' the neighbour asks, 'lending me your donkey today? I have some goods to transport to the next town'.
 The Mulla doesn't feel inclined to lend out the animal to that particular man, however; so, not to seem rude, he answers:
 'I'm sorry, but I've already lent him to somebody else'.
 Suddenly the donkey can be heard braying loudly behind the wall of the yard.
 'You lied to me, Mulla!' the neighbour exclaims. 'There it is behind that wall!'
 'What do you mean?' the Mulla replies indignantly. 'Whom would you rather believe, a donkey or your Mulla?'
 (<http://www.afghan-network.net/Funny/2.html>).

The above quoted tale also happens to be the third tale in *Hekaya za Abunuwas* (1935) although in the Swahili version, when Abunuwas is confronted about the braying donkey, he responds,

Sasa wewe umekuja kuazima punda ama umekuja kuazima mlio? Kama umekuja kuazima mlio na mimi nitalia. Abunuwas akalia, Ho! Ho! Ho!
 (Anonymous, 1935:3).

⁶ See Bassnett and Lefevere (1998) and Toury (1995).

Gloss: So have you come to borrow a donkey or its braying? If you have come to borrow the braying, I will bray. Abunuwas cried out Ho! Ho! Ho!

Following this, and a number of other tales, I would hereby like to make what may be a grand pronouncement: the Swahili Abu Nuwas is actually the direct equivalent of Nasreddin Hodja. Somehow, during the process of dissemination, Abunuwas acquired the name of the poet and the character of the trickster. Thus we find that Nasreddin Hodja was appropriated and created as the Swahili Abunuwas and then he was firmly placed in the setting of *The Nights* where he could frequent the Caliph and live in Baghdad.

The Swahili have the tendency of adopting the content of Arabic stories. According to Rollins (1983), among the tales adopted are: 'Kalila wa-Dimna, Abu Nuwas and Alf Layla wa-Layla, all of which were found on the coast in the 19th Century. Certainly it is significant that many Swahili prose examples are traceable to these earlier Oriental collections...' (Rollins, 1983:114).

The prevalence of this trend of appropriation in the Swahili translation polysystem seems to be quite widespread. Ingrams (1931), one of the prominent Swahili scholars talks of *Kibunuwasi*, which is yet another derivative of Abu Nuwas whose tales are also similar to Hodja's. Similarly, as discussed above, Ohly (1981) refers to Zigua folklores that include a certain *Sungura Kibunuwasi* (Hare the Kibunuwasi). The Zigua are a tribe in Handeni close to Tanga situated along the East African coast.

Since these tales were recounted to Missionaries at the turn of the century. It is obvious that Abunuwas is the result of the Turkish influence that was indirectly disseminated by speakers of Arabic, Persian and Indian. Thus, he is the coming together of the corruption of the poet from the Abassid dynasty and Nasreddin Hodja, the Turkish trickster. The above can be explained through the Ottoman Empire's

appropriation of the cultures of the people that it had colonized. It dominated Northern Africa, including Egypt, Libya and Sudan. According to Lodhi (2000:81) ‘there is relatively little Turkish influence on languages in East Africa, and what is found has arrived indirectly via speakers of Arabic, Persian and Indian languages’. Historically Egypt had a significant cultural influence on the coast. In an interview with Bi Kidude⁷, the oldest Zanzibari female vocalist who sings Arabic Umm Kulthum songs, the traditional *unyago* and *taarab* songs, she informed me that she remembers in her youth Egyptians were prominent in coastal cities such as Mombasa, Tanga, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. *Taarab* singers such as her came in contact with Egyptian singers on the grand dhows where they were all hired to sing away as these floated along the Indian Ocean. She was quite young at the time but remembers that singers, drummers and those with various other musical instruments would be placed on one end of the dhow while the masters lay on comfortable cushions and carpets, spread out on the other end, listening to Bi Kidude and her colleagues as she sang away and as their voices trailed off in the monsoon. Egyptian artists that she met on these trips would stay on the island for months entertaining the Arab elite before moving on to other parts of the Swahili coast. Her singing is highly influenced by this contact.⁸ Egypt is generally agreed to have influenced the arts⁹ including *Taarab* music and Swahili literature; the oldest surviving Swahili manuscript, *Hamziyya*, is a *tenzi* that was originally written in Egypt. Through Egypt, the culture of the Ottoman Empire – the Turkish culture which the Swahili viewed as Arabic penetrated into East Africa.

Negating this influence, we find for instance scholars such as Mulokozi lamenting this penetration by arguing that:

⁷ Interviewed in Zanzibar, 23rd July 2004.

⁸ See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxBf5z3eoqo>.

⁹ See Lodhi 2000.

Swahili poetry was greatly affected by this imposition of Arabic culture. Many poets, particularly those who wrote *tenzi*, derived their themes from Arabic and Persian myths, including the Koranic ones, which, as Kezilahabi rightly says, were quite alien, not to say irrelevant, to the African. The African slave was trying to identify with the conqueror, to aspire to the ideal, which in this sense meant the Arab and his way of life (1974:113).

The above quote not only negates the initial efforts of the Swahili in regards to the development of poetry and literature in general but it posits the age old question: who are the Swahili? This is a fundamental cultural question even today where the majority of Western scholars see them as those who inhabit the East coast of Africa and speak Swahili as their mother tongue whereas the linguists from the interior of the East African coast tend to include other Africans who came to settle in Tanzania and Kenya and spoke Swahili, largely as a second language. One can write an entire thesis on this question although our interest was to introduce an ongoing argument that interprets what is the initiation of Swahili translation as a channel for colonization and cultural inequalities. Those who view these initial Swahili steps into translation as colonization point out that ‘cultural interaction is only possible and desirable among equals; but in a slave – master relationship there is only cultural imposition on the part of the master, and protest and resistance on the part of the slave’ (ibid).

Whether the corruption of what is Abunuwas is the result of resistance among the Swahili, or simply the result of simple interaction between people of different cultures is therefore debatable. What can be validated is the fact that, during the colonial period, Turkish/ Ottoman culture penetrated into East Africa and was visible through the attires of the people of the lower echelon of the civil service who wore the red fez and the Turkish robe and drank Turkish coffee. Also, there was the introduction of new Swahili vocabulary including the military title, ‘*pasha*’. This

influence continued until Tanzania's independence where films and music that penetrated through Egypt were closely followed by East African coastal youths.

In my hypothesis, I would concur with Hitti (1979) who argues that these stories must have come to the East African coast through Egypt. Similarly, Lodhi's (2000) explanation that the link with the Ottoman Empire happened indirectly explains the distortion that must have happened during the dissemination of the Abu Nuwas/ Hodja's tales. Initially, they must have circulated in the oral form and later on in the written form. In turn the oral form must have greatly influenced the written form; it is for this reason that we find that the published tales of the Swahili Abunuwas are a corruption of the two characters, Abu Nuwas the poet, and Nasreddin Hodja the trickster. The intertwining of these two could only have happened through the oral influence of some sort of 'Chinese whispers' where hear-say was used as source material.

Since the real Abu Nuwas achieved notoriety by writing about homosexuality and alcohol, it was difficult for Brenn and Johnson to include his tales in their version of *The Nights*. Interestingly, although Adam, the recent translator of *The Nights* into Swahili has not shied away from including some eroticism in his tales, nevertheless, he did not translate tales such as "Abu Nuwas and the three youths" into Swahili either. Its translation would not only have shocked the Swahili, but the very basis of Swahili morality would not allow for a tale where the characters pass the night away, drinking, kissing and embracing beardless boys. In the same breath, it would also have contradicted with the canonical character of Abunuwas that the Swahili are familiar with.

The character of Abunuwas is proof of the existence of some tales of *The Nights* in oral form prior to their being written down or adapted in one way or another. Similarly, as a pseudotranslation, Abunuwas is quite unique therefore I

would not call this a norm. It may have been a peripheral norm during the colonial period where we find the existence of Sungura Kibunuwas and Kibunuwas as other version of Abunuwas, but I did not find any other example of this.

The primary position of translation during the colonial period is one fact that explains the ‘mushrooming’ so to speak of pseudotranslations such as Abunuwas and Swahili tales that are linked to *The Nights*. As pointed out in Chapter Two, Even-Zohar (1978: 193) explains that translated literature occupies a primary position in a country’s polysystem during three different instances. One of these instances is when a literature is ‘young’. The other instances are when a literature is peripheral or weak and when there is a revolution, literary vacuum or a given turning point. In this instance, although Swahili poetry has a long tradition in East Africa, Swahili prose was introduced much later¹⁰ which means that at the onset of colonialism, the literature was still young. Since the literature was in the process of being established, we find that translations were an integral part of innovatory forces and played a major role in Tanzania’s literary history. With reference to Even-Zohar (1978), this kind of situation makes no clear-cut distinctions between original and translated writings which explains why works such as Abunuwas mushroomed and the fact that, the ambiguous nature of their sources are never questioned.

4.5 *Alfu lela Ulela* and its Swahili translators

4.5.1 Edwin Brenn and Frederick Johnson

The first written Swahili translation of *The Nights* appeared in the monthly journal *Mambo Leo* founded by the Colonial Education Department in Dar es Salaam in 1923. According to Geider (2007:189), various tales from *The Nights* were serialized including ‘The Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor’ (from 1923–24), ‘Aladdin and the

¹⁰ See chapter one.

Wonderful Lamp' (from 1925–26), and 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' (1926). *The Nights* were published in book form in 1929. It was titled *Mazungumzo ya Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Elfu na Moja* (1929). The translation was undertaken by Edwin W. Brenn and edited by Frederick Johnson. It was published in two volumes.

Pym (2000) advocates the understanding of human mediators in regards to translation before moving on to translation texts. He goes as far as pronouncing that we would discover a lot 'by looking at translators rather than translation' (Pym, 2000). As stated in the previous chapter, I certainly agree that translators are vital in understanding the reasons behind the approaches that were used in translations but they have to be understood in conjunction with the texts. Nevertheless, despite my best intentions at piecing together the profiles of the translator and editor of *Mazungumzo ya Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Elfu na Moja* (1929), unearthing the private lives of Brenn and Johnson respectively has been next to impossible. Pym's argument that 'remarkably little is known about most translators' (Pym, 2000) is quite relevant in this case.

Edwin Brenn worked within the British colonial administration as a senior clerk in the Education Department (Iliffe 1979: 266). He is believed to have been an African because; according to Geider (2004) he was educated at Church Missionary School at Rabai near Mombasa which exclusively educated Africans. Among the students were many former slaves who sometimes took new names after they got rescued by the British navy from the high seas. Also, according to Geider who quotes Diedrich Westermann, Brenn was an *Eingeborener* which means 'native' (Diedrich Westermann (1940:29) in Geider, 2004:253).

There is a hypothesis that he may have been a freed slave. According to Maalim Idris Saleh of Zanzibar Islamic heritage¹¹, Brenn was an ex slave.

¹¹ Interviewed in Zanzibar, 21st July 2004

Historically, the slaves would be freed and taken to settle in Zanzibar, Mombasa, Durban and Karachi. These slaves would often convert to Christianity, take up new names, and get baptized then settle near the church. In Zanzibar, the Anglican Church built a school at Kiungani where ex-slaves were the first Africans to get a western education. Some of these ex-slaves formed the first political cultural movement called AA (African Association). The leadership included Lloyd Boyd, a freed slave from the subcontinent of India. One of these slaves, James Mbotela wrote *uhuru wa mtumwa*, (Freedom of a slave), his biography. Those who went to Karachi were converted to Islam and were quite disadvantaged; they are called *Makrani* and became artisans at best.¹² Those who were settled in Durban still identify themselves as Zanzibaris; unfortunately, they were always considered as squatters until fairly recently.¹³

On the other hand, Frederick Johnson was a British administrator who worked as a Swahili lexicographer and translator and he was also the first Secretary of the Inter-Territorial Language Committee (Whiteley, 1969:84). The development of Swahili was a passion for him and he is acknowledged as a man who worked tirelessly to standardize the language and its orthography. He compiled the first Swahili dictionary titled *A Standard Swahili – English Dictionary*, published in 1939. He has also translated *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift into *Safari za Gulliver* (1932), and Kipling's *Mowgli stories* from *the Jungle Books* into *Hadithi za Maugli*. Johnson and Brenn collaborated in the translation of a number of English classics including Daniel Defoe's *Treasure Island* (1719) into *Kisiwa chenye hazina* (1943)

¹² Sheedi or Makrani community of Karachi are the descendants of slaves brought from East Africa to Sindh and Balochistan via Muscat, Oman during 18th and 19th century (For more see original.britannica.com/eb/topic-359322/Makrani)

¹³ In 1873, the British Navy intercepted an Arab slaving ship transporting the Zanzibaris to the United States and arranged for 143 of the freed slaves to be settled in the then Port Natal area (see www.lawlibrary.co.za/notice/wordsanddeeds/2004/wordsanddeeds_2004_09_23.htm)

and Haggard Rider's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) into *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929).

This first edition of *Alfu lela ulela*, published in 1929 contains 34 stories. It is worth mentioning here that this edition was meant for a young audience. In the preface, the reader is informed that the stories originate from the Indians, Arabs and Persians, and that the tales were originally recounted during the reign of the Abbasid dynastic ruler Harun al-Rashid.

The source text for this translation is unknown although it is believed that it was an English translation rather than any of the Arabic manuscripts. I concur with the above since, of the few tales that have been completely translated rather than abridged, they tend to follow Burton's plot quite closely. Similarly, according to Geider (2004:254), 'the arrangement of the text more or less follows the sequence as given by Lane (nos.1–27, 33); the remaining stories appear in Burton's translation'. Having looked at Lane's (1838-1840) and Burton's translations, it is obvious that the stories appear almost chronologically in both works especially number 1 to 14. Lane's (1838-40) translation is quite similar to Burton's (1885) except he has not accentuated the sexual references as Burton has done. Hassan Adam, who has re-translated these tales recently also concurs with the above and it is for this reason that he too has used Burton's (1885) translations as well as the German translations by Weil (1865) for his work.

Although the first edition of the Swahili translation by Brenn and Johnson was compiled into two-volumes, the reprints were sub-divided into four volumes. It is these later editions which are currently available in the market. The original translation is currently out of print although its illustrated drawings signed by H. I. Ford which project the scenery, action and protagonists with their Oriental appearance and dress have been recycled by Adam in his current translation.

From Volume 1:

1. *Mwanzo* (Story of King Shahriyar and his Brother translated as the beginning of the frame).
2. *Mfanyaji Biashara na Jini* (Tale of the trader and the Jinni).
3. *Mzee wa Kwanza na Mbuzi* (The first Sheykh and the Gazelle- referred to as the goat in the Swahili translation).
4. *Mzee wa Pili na Mbwa wawili Weusi* (The Second Sheykh and the Two Black hounds).
5. *Mvuvi* (The Fisherman).
6. *Mfalme wa Kiyonani na Douban, Mganga* (King Yoonan and the sage dooban).
7. *Mtu na Kasuku* (The Husband and the Parrot) - husband is translated as ‘person’ in Swahili).
8. *Waziri Aliyeadhibiwa* (The Envious Wezeer and the Prince and the Ghoolah).
9. *Mfalme kijana wa Visiwa Vyeusi* (The Young King of the Black Islands).
10. *Mawalii watatu waana wa Wafalme, na Wanawake watano wa Bagdadi* (The Porter and the ladies of Baghdad and of the three royal Mendicants).
11. *Walii wa Kwanza, Mwana wa Mfalme* (The First Royal Mendicant).
12. *Walii wa Pili, Mwana wa Mfalme* (The Second Royal Mendicant).
13. *Mtu mwenye Kijicho na yule aliyeomwonea Kijicho* (The Envier and the Envied).
14. *Walii wa Tatu, Mwana wa Mfalme* (The Third Royal Mendicant).

From Volume 2:

- 15 to 22 *Safari saba za Sindbad, Baharia* (The Seven Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor).
23. *Mbilikimo mwenye Kinundu* (The Pygmy with the Hunchback).
- 24 *Nduguye Kinyozi wa Tano* (The Barber’s Tale of his Fifth Brother).
25. *Nduguye Kinyozi wa Sita* (The Barber’s Tale of his Sixth Brother).

The following appear in the 2nd original volume but in volume 3 of the Reprint:

26. *Mambo yaliyompata Kamaralzaman na Badoura Binti Mfalme* (The Adventures of Kamaralzaman and Princess Badoura).
27. *Nuridin na Mwajemi Mzuri* (Nuridin and the Good Persian).
28. *Aladdin na Taa ya Ajabu* (Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp).
29. *Mambo yaliyompata Harun Rashidi, Khalifa wa Bagdadi* (The Adventures of Harun Rashidi, caliph of Baghdad).

The following appear in the 2nd original volume but in volume 4 of the Reprint:

30. *Baba-Abdalla Kipofu* (Abdalla the Blind).
31. *Sidi-Nouman*. (Sidi-Nouman).
32. *Ali Kogia, Mfanyaji Biashara wa Bagdadi* (Ali Kogia, the Merchant of Baghdad).
33. *Farasi wa Uchawi* (The Magic Horse).
34. *Ndugu wawili wanawake waliomwonea kijicho Dada yao Mdogo* (The Two Sisters Who Envied Their Younger Sister).

The reprinted editions from 1974 have been revised considerably by O. Saidi (vol. 1) and A. S. Yahya (vols. 2–4). Of the original 34 stories, four have been deleted - (nos. 6, 7, 8, and 29). In the Revised Edition the illustrations by K. K. Abdalla have been simplified and they depict Oriental and African characters. The scenes of spirits from the 1929 edition have been erased. It has to be noted that the Swahili translation ends without the conclusion part of the frame story.

It is important to note that translator's experiences and their socio-cultural and political outlook have played a very important role in the final product. For instance, the influence of Brenn's ideological outlook has been vital in his final product. Understood to have stemmed from a background in slavery and faced with the task of

translating a work of Oriental origin, a work that originated from those who had captured him into slavery, must have prompted him to come face to face with his demons. This can be hypothesized in the way that he resisted the portrayal of the stereotyped slave by presenting them as humane. He did not portray slaves as hideous but rather seems to have felt empathy towards them. He uses phrases such as '*baba moja kubwa mno*' (an extremely big man- *baba* also means father) instead of the derogative equivalence as seen in Burton and Lane's (1838-1840) English translations. Brenn could have used *Jitu*, which is the equivalent of a 'giant', but instead he preferred to humanize the characters.

On the other hand, as a translator, the translation of the recent edition of *Alfu lela ulela*, Hassan Adam, who will be discussed below seems to be sensitive to religion; the portrayal of religion and its connotations play an important role in his translation. He often dwells on Islamic rituals such as cleansing before prayer. He inserts the relevant Islamic phrases for the different occasions such as, upon receiving news of death, his characters would utter *inna ilahi wa ina lilahi rajiun* which happens to be his own addition. He also uses a language that has coastal origins; it is not necessarily Kiunguja, Kimvita or Kitanga but a mixture of what is largely spoken along the coast, a language linked to Islam, a language that he perceives as one that would restore the Swahili identity.

The different outlook and experiences of these translators, not only separated by time and space but also ideological convictions and beliefs also played an important role in determining the norms of translation which are a reflection of not only the individual translator's socialization but also of society as a whole.

4.5.2 Hassan Adam

Mr. Hassan Adam informed me that he is Tanzanian of Somali ancestry,¹⁴ born and educated in Tanga, Tanzania and in Budapest, Hungary where he studied journalism in 1964. He has been largely influenced by adventure books that he read as a young boy and adventures that he experienced. His Geography teacher, a certain Mr. Morris, would often say, 'See Venice and die!'; this, coupled with the fact that an old seaman of Somali origin would often tell him tales of the adventures that he had lived at different ports and tales of what lay beneath the small town of Tanga fascinated Adam a great deal. He had spent part of his childhood in Somalia, grazing camels and day dreaming. Once, he had gotten lost and was rescued from the mouth of a cheetah. Later on, when in Tanzania and able to read, he devoured Brenn's translations which were very popular at the time. All these influences had a great impact on him as a young boy; he thought that he would become a sea man, so as to see the world. He ended up becoming an academician but has traveled to the four corners of the world.

In his own words, Mr Adam states that, when he was young, his thirst for the *other* so to speak was not properly quenched since soon after independence, with 'Africanization'¹⁵ and the introduction of *Ujamaa*¹⁶, the books that he had come to love and many others simply vanished! A few years later he re-found them at the Institute of African Studies in Cologne where he had found employment as a lecturer. His discovery coincided with the fact that, at the time he had just started editing and publishing a Swahili literary journal titled JUA. Therefore Adam started serializing the tales in the given cultural and literary journal. Reader response was very positive and as a result he decided to embark on translating the complete version.

¹⁴ Telephone Interview, 8th march 2008.

¹⁵ Personal correspondence (e-mail) 8th March 2008.

¹⁶ The concept that was introduced by Nyerere and it depicts 'familyhood'.

Professionally, Mr. Adam is a lecturer who has written and published widely. Prior to living in Diaspora, he worked in Mogadishu, Somalia for an American firm as an Assistant Procurement and also as a BBC correspondent in Somalia. He also worked as a journalist for the Deutsche Welle, the Voice of Germany, in the Swahili Department in Cologne. He speaks fluent Swahili, Somali, English, German, and Hungarian and understands Arabic. He also has one daughter whom he calls the apple of his eye.

Adam has also written Swahili grammar books including *Kiswahili - Intermediate Course* (1993), *Kiswahili - Elementary Course with Key* (1987). He has written children's books including, *Hasira Hasara* (1994), *Alibaba na majangiri arobaini* (2004) which is the equivalent of *the Arabian Nights'* Alibaba and the Forty Thieves and *wimbo wa bata bukini na hadithi nyingine* (2004) meaning the song of the goose and other stories, a compilation of animal folktales which has its roots in Aesop. He is currently working on an autobiographical novel.

As previously noted, Hassan Adam, a Lecturer of Somali and Swahili languages at the University of Cologne, has undertaken the task of re-translating the 'complete' Nights into Swahili. In our interview he informed me that at the end of this mammoth task he expects to publish ten volumes of the translation. Usage of the word 'complete' is quite interesting as it is the word that historically Western editors and publishers thrived for. In this particular case, when interviewed, Adam's publisher, Walter Bgoya from Mkuki na Nyota¹⁷, advanced that the current *Masimulizi Kamilifu ya Alfu Lela Ulela au siku elfu moja na moja* (2004) – Complete Account of *Alfu Lela Ulela* or a thousand and one nights- is a more 'comprehensive' translation which includes tales that were excluded in the previous translations. These

¹⁷ Interviewed in Dar es Salaam, 7th November 2006.

ten volumes which contain an average of 200 or so pages compared to the 1929 four volumes that had an average of 60 pages will certainly contain more substance.

‘Retranslations constitute a special case because the values they create are likely to be doubly domestic, determined not only by the domestic values which the translator inscribes in the foreign, but also by the values inscribed in a previous version’ (Venuti, 2004:25). The choice of books to be retranslated is largely based on ‘an interpretation that differs from that inscribed in a previous version’ (ibid, 26). Venuti (2004) continues to argue that the pre-existing translation may be judged as insufficient, erroneous. The retranslation would present ‘claims of greater adequacy, completeness or accuracy...’ (ibid). Thus Adam’s claim that his translation of *Alfu Lela ulela*¹⁸ is a ‘complete’ version of *The Nights*, despite his publisher’s usage of the term ‘comprehensive’ seems to be reflective of this. Nevertheless, it can not be argued that Adam has filled the gaps that were left by Brenn’s abridgements. Adam’s translation includes tales hitherto excluded such as The Story of the Third Sheikh with the Mule translated as *Kisa cha Mzee wa Tatu na Nyumbu*, The Story of Shamsuddin Ali of Cairo and Badruddin Hassan of Basra translated as *Kisa cha Shamsuddin Ali wa Qahira na Badruddin Hassan wa Basrah*, The Story of the Three Apples translated as *Kisa cha Matufaha Matatu*, The Story of the Christian Broker translated as *Kisa cha Mkristo* and The Story of the Jewish Doctor translated as *Kisa cha Mganga wa Kiyahudi*.

In the post-colonial period, Nyerere also re-translated his *Juliasi Kaizari* (1963, 1969). His reasons have been guided by what he saw as erroneous deviations; he wanted to have a faithful rendering of Shakespeare.¹⁹ The errors that he wanted to correct are reflective of the Swahili history and identity.²⁰ He wanted the work to be understood by the Swahili. He had to retranslate so that his work could conform to his

¹⁸ See chapter three.

¹⁹ See Introduction to *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969).

²⁰ More about this will be discussed in the course of this chapter.

audience expectations. That is why in the retranslation, he Swahilizes²¹ the characters names, thus making this ‘doubly domestic’ (Venuti, 2004:25). Similarly, *The Merchant of Venice* was previously translated during the colonial period by the University Mission to Central Africa in Zanzibar. The translation was included in *Hadithi Ingereza* (English Tales) published in 1900 and was titled *Kuwia na Kuwiwa* which means ‘Pardon’. The title most probably refers to one of the characters, the Jewish Shylock who should have pardoned the Venetian merchant, Antonio, instead of going after a pound of his flesh and in the process came to lose all his wealth.

Re-translation seems to be located in the post-colonial period. There is no evidence of re-translation having taken place prior to then. It is only since the 1960s and in the current time that we find retranslation. Works that have been re-translated also include *Macbeth*, *Cinderella* and a number of children’s classics. In my interview with Adam, the translator of the current *Alfu lela ulela*, he talked of an interest in re-translating a number of the currently out of print translations such as *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929) and *Kisiwa chenye hazina* (1943). This plan has not materialized as yet but their re-translation would mean that Swahili translation is re-appropriating the contents of its polysystem. Adam’s intention to re-translate and the strategies that will be employed by him, will probably have an important bearing in the future of Swahili translations. Re-translations reflect changes in the values of the translating culture apart from being a response to new ways of reading foreign texts. It would be interesting to analyse the strategies he will employ in his future re-translation of *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929). This is one of the Swahili translations that played a primordial role in the establishment of the terms in which Swahili literature was to be carried out. It presented an exotic, primitive and uncivilized Africa. For the original work, the audience in the Western world were

²¹ Making them more Swahili.

fascinated by Quarteman's quest for treasure in the 'dark continent'. In the introduction to the Swahili translation, Frederick Johnson (1960) quotes Rider Haggard, the author of *King Solomon's mines* as saying that he was extremely pleased that his fictional treasure turned out to be true:

hayo yaliyobuniwa yamethubutishwa kuwa ni kweli; mashimo ya Mfalme Sulemani niliyokua nikiyafikiri sasa yamegunduliwa nayo sasa yanatoa dhahabu tena, na kwa habari zilizotoka hivi karibuni, hata almasi pia hutoka (Introduction).

That which was fiction has become reality, the King Solomon Mines that I had imagined have been discovered. Gold is now mined and from recent news, diamonds too.

It is believed that King Solomon had actually mined in Sofala, an area covering present day territories of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This brings the content of the text much closer to home since Tanzania borders Mozambique to the South. Will Adam domesticate or foreignize his work? Will he refute the negative portrayal of the African or will he find another way of distinguishing his work from the earlier version.

Adam's source texts for *Masimulizi Kamilifu ya Alfu Lela Ulela au siku elfu moja na moja* (2004) are the English translations by Burton and a German translation by Weil (1865). Adam uses Ford's illustrations from the Brenn and Johnson translation (1929) and 'freely combines them with other nineteenth century illustrations by Henri Baron, Horace Castelli, Gustave Doré and others, taken from a recent re-issue of German translations of French popular printings from 1860 to 1865' (Pinson 2001 in Geider, 2004: 256). According to Geider (ibid),

Adam's preference for peculiar 'Oriental' images and a new 'coastal' language in contrast to the somewhat mechanistic standard Swahili is obviously connected to a process of restoring the identity of coastal Swahili that had become blurred during the era of Tanzanian *Ujamaa* politics (in effect until 1985). These politics had thoroughly attempted to submit the nation to Swahili dominance and, in consequence, to level the cultural peculiarities of the country's ethnic diversity.

This preference for coastal Swahili as a counter to standard Swahili specifically from the *Ujamaa* period is not specific to Adam but also a number of Swahili authors who hail from the coast. This includes the author, Shafi Adam Shafi, whose most recent novel *Haini* (2004) - (Traitor), denounces the government of Zanzibar as it was led by the late President Karume. To this end, it uses an extremely oral coastal – Zanzibari dialect. This given response is a consequence of the feeling of having been robbed of their identity by what was an Africanizing ideology. The *Ujamaa* period had strived for uniformity and in combating all feelings of tribalism and the formation of ‘cliques’, ended up making those societies that had had more development than others during the pre-independence period feel as if they have been forced to take up an identity that is not truly theirs. Thus, one finds that there is a general feeling among the Swahili that the area that had been occupied by the Arab sultanate, which is therefore Swahili, was not developed by the post-colonial government as much as those that weren’t. Therefore Kilwa for instance, the capital of the Swahili empire and a thriving Swahili port in its hey day and Bagamoyo, a thriving economic hub with the biggest slave market in the region have been left out of the country’s development. Todate, there are many areas of Kilwa for instance that still do not have electricity and running water whereas other areas in the interior, for instance, Kigoma on lake Tanganyika and Musoma in Lake Victoria are thriving. As a response to this, we find that at the moment, Zanzibar is calling for constitutional changes and self determination so it may be independent of the mainland. Adam is therefore among the producers who are re-embracing what he has been robbed of. This concept is discussed at length in the language and style sub-section below.

On the other hand, one of the main reasons that endeared *The Nights* to Adam is its popularity among the Swahili which can be pinned down to the fact that, as a people, the Swahili are curious about the supernatural. The supernatural is recounted

in myths, legends and folk beliefs where strangeness is justified and given an explanation and often these folk tales would relate an event from the primordial time and then justify its occurrence in the present. Similarly, the concept is linked to creatures such as the jinn and demons.

These spirits are referred to as *pepo*. They tend to somehow feature in the everyday life of the Swahili. In most Swahili households it is normal to hear stories about people's experiences with the supernatural. As a Swahili I have heard various versions of stories that feature a male relative driving at night and seeing a beautiful, tall woman dressed all in white who then asks for favours (often in the form of a car ride). Then the women would turn out to have horse's hooves instead of feet. There are also tales concerning maledictions that befall those who do not obey the social norms and mode of conduct. For instance, the '*ruhani*', a largely good spirit, is believed to have been domesticated by the Swahili ancestors, especially from the coast. These are believed to be helpful, playful and can be inherited. The rituals to appease them would be performed by a *Maalim* who possesses Islamic knowledge.²² On the other hand, the *Bukini*, a spirit from Madagascar and the *Habshia*, a spirit from Ethiopia, require, among other items, alcohol consumption and dance for appeasement.²³

An interesting incident is one that Dr Hadjivayanis recounted to me during one of our interviews.²⁴ It took place in Tanzania in the 1990s where a candidate for the parliament exhumed the dead body of an Arab merchant buried at Nzega in Tabora region. The latter was believed to have had *ruhani*. The candidate believed that by digging out the dead merchants' heart, he would thenceforth acquire the *ruhani* who in turn would help him win the elections. Similarly, there are beliefs

²² Growing up, I remember vividly seeing my elders 'conversing' with them, for instance, if one had lost a piece of gold jewellery, it would be pinned down to the *ruhani* playing tricks on the owner.

²³ Also see chapter five.

²⁴ Interviewed in Rome, 9th March 2008.

about witches who turn men into lions called *Mbojo*, in Singida, central Tanzania. The *Mbojo* phenomenon²⁵ reached its crux in the late 1950s when a number of people were killed and all had markings of having been scratched by lions. That fact shook the colonial authorities and culminated in trials in the then Central Province of Tanganyika. The accused were mostly aged women of the Nyaturu tribe, suspected to be the witch doctors. They were believed to transform men into lions who in turn kill for them. It was explained by the investigators that these ‘witches’ kidnap children, cut off their tongues and transform them into zombies.²⁶ These would then be made to sleep during the day and cultivate at night. They were the ones who were made to wear lion skins and kill for the aged ladies. It needs to be pointed out that many people, especially the masses, are still to be convinced of this explanation.

Hekaya za Abunuwasi (1935) which will be discussed in this chapter and Edward Streere’s *Swahili Tales* (1870) are among the works that have put together tales from the supernatural that have a direct link with *The Nights*. The fact that the contents are largely derived from oral sources shows their popularity.

Hassan Adam is also married and has one daughter who is the apple of his eye. He currently divides his time between Tanga in Tanzania where he has built a villa meant for ‘comfort in old age’, and Cologne, the city of his adulthood.

4.6 A Brief Analysis of the Translations

As previously noted, Even-Zohar supposes translated literature to be a distinct system within a certain literary polysystem, often operating in the periphery of this polysystem. However, according to Even-Zohar three types of situations are likely to shift translated literature to the centre of the polysystem and make it a vehicle for introducing a new repertoire to the centre. The first situation takes place when a

²⁵ Also mentioned by Ohly, 1981:38.

²⁶ This is the same case with the voodoo tradition in Haiti.

literature is in the process of being established and cannot immediately create the repertoire which is needed to maintain the system. This is the kind of situation that enabled *Alfu Lela Ulela* to be a canonical Swahili work operating at the centre of the Swahili polysystem.

Alfu Lela Ulela enjoys great popularity, a fact that is reflected by the number of printed editions that it has. It has also been inspirational to canonical Swahili writers as Ryanga (1985:164) points out in her discussion of translated literature:

Baada ya muda, baadhi ya waandishi kwa lugha ya Kiswahili waliathiriwa na fasihi hiyo. Athari hizi zinadhihirika katika hadithi zilizobuniwa na waandishi chipukizi wa Kiswahili kama mwandishi maarufu, Shaaban Robert: Kusadikika, Adili na Nduguze; halafu Kurwa na Doto, (M. S. Farsy); Nahodha Fikirini, (Ali Jamadaar); Kisima cha Giningi, (Mohamed S. Abdulla).

Gloss: After a while, some Swahili writers were influenced by the given literature. This influence is obvious in the stories created by the emerging Swahili writers such as the famous Shaaban Robert's *Kusadikika* and *Adili na Nduguze*, then *Kurwa na Doto* by M.S Farsy, *Nahodha Fikirini* by Ali Jamadaar; *Kisima cha Giningi* by Mohamed S. Abdulla

This influence is explicitly obvious in Mohamed S. Abdulla's *Kisima cha Giningi* (1968), 'the Giningi well', a tale about spirits and demons, a constant theme in *The Nights*. *Nahodha Fikirini*, 'Fikirini the Sailor' is largely inspired by Sindbad the Sailor's adventurous journeys. Shaaban Robert's *Adili na Nduguze* (1952), 'Adili and his Siblings/Brothers' is also largely influenced by *The Nights*. It is a story about Adili's betrayal by his brothers. *Adili* means righteous, his brothers are named *Hasidi* and *Mwivu* meaning 'Spiteful' and 'Jealousy' respectively. The tale has spirits and demonic characters such as *Mrefu*, 'tall'. The plot includes a town that turns to stone, spirits who take human forms, such as Hunde the evil vizier, and then Adili's brothers become monkeys. In the same breath, it needs to be noted that not all Swahili scholars have embraced this influence. We find for instance criticisms that view these given

artists as subjects who have simply been assimilated by the colonizer (Mulokozi, 1974:133).

The predominance of such influences are explained by Even-Zohar as the result of a process of ‘interference’ (Even Zohar, 2005: 50).²⁷ Even-Zohar points out that a literary system is influenced by another literary system or often more of them, and also literatures are never in non-interference. Even-Zohar goes as far as pronouncing a law which states that interference is always taking place in literatures, even though it may not always be visible since interference often starts at the periphery of the system. Similarly ‘it is not an easy matter, however, to determine at what point we would agree that interference has started to take place. Durable contacts, while not producing conspicuously visible interference, may however, generate conditions of availability, which will facilitate interference’ (ibid, 56-57). It should therefore be taken as the explanation for similarities in literatures, which reminds us of the mushrooming of pseudotranslations such as Abunuwas in Swahili which do not have any strong proof against being linked to the orient.

In his discussion on the conditions for the emergence and occurrence of interference, Even-Zohar distinguishes between independent and dependent literary systems. Independent systems are understood to develop more or less on their own, whereas dependent systems, as the name implies, come to depend on other systems to maintain themselves. The reason for this is pinned down to the fact that they are weak and therefore do not have enough options within their system to remain free. They therefore look up to the dominant or prestigious culture as a source (ibid, 52).

Interestingly political and economic weaknesses are usually correlated with dependency although this is not a de facto consequence. This latter statement echoes with the situation during which *The Nights* were first introduced in oral form by the

²⁷ Interference can be defined as a relation(ship) between literatures, whereby a certain literature A (a source literature) may become a source of direct or indirect loans for another literature B (a target literature) (Even-Zohar, 1990:54).

Arab traders in search of slaves and ivory and later on, its translation in the 1930s by the colonial administration. In both cases, we can not really argue that the Swahili were politically independent. Similarly, although many African states, Tanzania included, have been politically independent for a number of years,²⁸ this independence is linked to economic dependence which means that we now have an altered form of dependency.

This dependency may have been one of the reasons as to why even the Swahili re-translation of *The Nights* was undertaken from the English translation and not the Arabic original. One would have thought that, with reference to the special relationship that the Swahili have had with the Arab Peninsula, translation from Arabic would not have been a great challenge.²⁹ Nevertheless, the elements at play in the 1930's dictated that the translation is undertaken from English which, at the time, was the main independent and dominant polysystem that was influencing the Swahili polysystem and similarly, for Adam, English is the language of the globalized present and probably future too.

Similarly, it has been argued that translation from the Arabic original to the English texts that were used as source texts by the Swahili translators was difficult at best. According to Irwin (1994) translating *The Nights* from the original Arabic was an extremely demanding task. This was made more challenging by the fact that 'translations from Arabic are peculiarly dependent upon judgement about context and plausibility' (Irwin, 1994:10). Since the manuscripts did not have any punctuation nor were there any capital letters, it meant that translators had an abundance of choices and some translated following personal whims. Also, having the spoken colloquial language and the regional dialects on the classical Arabic made the task even harder.

²⁸ Although this is debatable especially with neo colonialism and the shackles brought on by monetary aid.

²⁹ For example Farsy's translation of the Quran was undertaken from Arabic into Swahili, see chapter two.

As previously noted, none of the translations into Swahili were undertaken from the Arabic original but rather from the English versions. Brenn's source text is believed to be Burton's (1885) translation because of the numbering and flow of the tales. Similarly, following a conversation with Hassan Adam, the role that Burton played as an explorer and orientalist would have made his version more attractive to those who were also working for the great British Empire. Hassan Adam uses Burton's translation as his source although he also refers to Payne's (1901) translation as well as a German edition by Gustav Weil (1865).

When I questioned Adam about his usage of a translation as source text for his translation, especially since he also reads and writes Arabic, he explained to me that, not only was the Arabic original inaccessible but he also wanted to use the same source text that the previous translators had used. Interestingly, as it will be seen in Chapter 6, Deogratius Simba has also translated Naguib Mahfudh's novel, *The Search* from its English translation rather than the Arabic original. At this stage we can already attest to the preliminary norms in regards to the directness of translation. It seems that this practice is not camouflaged but rather, since English has been the language of the hegemony, it is largely accepted.

4.7 Towards a Target Oriented Study of Language and Culture

The following section will offer a comparative analysis between Brenn's translation and that of Adam. Examples from other translations that were carried out during the colonial period will also be analysed. We have highlighted some of the specific words that will be used in the examples. This has been done so as to facilitate analysis and comparisons.

4.7.1 Language and Style Usage

It needs to be pointed out that there are a few linguistic differences between Brenn's original translation of 1929 and the Revised Editions. The message of the text remains the same, but the expressions change. For instance, in the 1929 edition Brenn uses a lot more Kiunguja expressions that sound oral, for instance, sit down is: '*kaa kitako*' whereas in the Revised Edition this is just '*kaa*'. A good example in their differences is apparent in the following example:

1929 edition: *E, baa wee! Yakupasa ufe kwa haya: kwa kumtendea hivyo mkeo kijana ambaye hakukosa kitu? Huna budi kuwa wewe u mtu mbayaa...*' (1929, Vol 2:191).

Gloss: O, how evil! You should **die of shame** – doing all that to your **young** wife while she has not done any wrong? You are without doubt an evil person...', 'the adjective evil is pulled and elongated as one would when saying it'

Revised Edition: *E, baa wee! Yakupasa ufe hata haya huna – unamtenda hivyo mkeo naye hakukosa kitu? Bila shaka wewe mtu mbaya...*' (1973, Vol 2: 54).

Gloss: O, how evil! **You should die, you don't even have any shame** – doing all that to your wife while she has not done any wrong? You are without doubt evil...'

As previously noted, the message in both is largely the same it is only the way of expressing that sometimes differs. It is for this reason that we have not differentiated the two editions unless it has been of necessity. This would have meant extensive repetitiveness in our references.

Both Brenn's and Adam's translations use Standard Swahili. The difference however is that Brenn's translation is distinctly the Kiunguja dialect whereas Adam uses a language that is generally used along the East African coast, '*lugha ya mwambao*'. As noted earlier, he does not use a specific dialect, for instance Kiunguja or Kimvita, his vocabulary and structure is distinctly used by those who live around

Unguja, Pemba and Tanga. He also inserts a large number of archaisms. This dialect has evolved over time and is not only rich with Arabic vocabulary and expressions, but the words of Bantu origin also differ. For example, those from the coast would say, *nimerejea*, 'I have returned', *Shindika mlango*, 'close the door', whereas those from the mainland would say *Nimerudi* and *Funga mlango* respectively.

As previously pointed out, Adam has made a conscious choice of making his work thus; he aims at re-introducing the richness of Arabic into Swahili by using what he calls the original Swahili, thence there is usage of Arabic root words such as *Ukiniidhini* (vol 3, pg 24) – If you permit, *Faragha* (Vol 3, pg 25) - behind closed doors and *Khafifu* (vol 1, pg 88) - of low quality, among many others. He uses coastal terms for kinship such as *Binti wa ammi* *yangu*, 'My uncle's daughter', mainland Swahili speakers use the term *mtoto wa kike/ msichana* and *mjomba* respectively. Another term is *Kumradhi kijana*, 'Excuse me young man'; mainland Swahili uses the term *samahani*. And we also find that he often uses Swahilized Arabic, for instance on Sindbad's fourth journey, he refers to his wife as '*mke wangu l'azizi*' (Vol 2, pg 164) instead of *mke wangu mpenzi* which is the standard usage. The term *l'aziz* is derived from Arabic and it means 'sweet'. The other terms that he has used include *dhalimu*, 'unjust' and *akastaajabu*, 'surprised' whereas in the mainland the terms *mwonevu* and *akashangaa* would be used respectively. This language style is in accordance to what Venuti would term foreignizing due to the usage of a variation language. Variations can be regional and social dialects, archaism, jargons, technical terminologies, stylistic innovations and neologisms.³⁰

Interestingly, in my interview with Maalim Idris Saleh, he lamented the fact that coastal Swahili was being marginalized and thrust into oblivion. New dictionaries are being compiled in the mainland and they include terminologies that,

³⁰ See Venuti (1995).

according to the Sheikh, are ‘not even Swahili’. Maalim Idris Saleh noted that, ‘the Swahili have a sense of being dispossessed in terms of their land, political and cultural freedom, livelihood and above all the exploitation of their culture and language by those from the mainland’.³¹

The new words that are coined by institutions such as TUKI aim to fill a void in Swahili. These terminologies are inclusive and thence include words from the local Bantu dialects. The inclusiveness started with *Ujamaa* where new terms were introduced and these in turn began to make in-roads and even dominated over coastal Swahili. From the Zanaki have been introduced words such as *ng’atuka* (retire) to replace *kustaafu*. This was introduced by Nyerere, directed at the elders in politics nudging them to give way for the new generation to enter politics. The word ‘*machinga*’ from the makonde means petty traders. It is such terms which displease the coastal speakers of Swahili especially since they have become widespread and are used by the majority. It has to be pointed out that during *Ujamaa*, Swahili ceased to be an exclusively coastal ethnic phenomenon. There was a ‘trend toward the de-ethnicization of Swahili literature in Tanzania (which) was further consolidated by the country’s leftist move to ujamaa’ (Mazrui, 2007:28). Nyerere aimed at fusing ‘the cultural label Swahili and the national label Tanzanian’ so that they gradually became ‘synonymous’ (ibid).

Since early literatures tended to use the dialects of the coast, Adam endeavours to re-centralize what has been lamented as being marginalized. Terminologies used in the coast are linked with Islam and Islamic ideals. In our interview, Adam expressed his ideas saying that

*Chimbuko la Kiswahili ni mwambao wa Afrika mashariki, na Kiswahili kina maneno mengi ya kigeni, hasa maneno ya Kiarabu, Ki-ajemi, Ki-Hindi, Ki-Turuki, Kiingereza, Kijerumani, Kireno, hata Kifaransa. Waandishi wengi siku hizi wanatumia vibaya maneno ya kigeni, hasa ya asili ya Kiarabu.*³²

³¹ From my interview with Sheikh Idris, Zanzibar, 21st July 2004.

³² From personal correspondence with Mr Adam, 8th March 2008.

The East African coast is the origin of Swahili, and Swahili has a lot of foreign vocabulary, especially words from Arabic, Persian, Indian, Turkish, English, German, Portuguese and even French. Many writers these days tend to use these foreign words wrongly, especially those of Arabic origin.

By the above, Adam refers to the original Bantu stock of the Swahili, the wangozi who had settled along the East Coast of Africa around Mombasa, Pemba, Kilwa, Pate, Lamu and Zanzibar, a people who, due to their strategic geographical positioning found themselves in contact with peoples and cultures from many maritime nations. By translating this work using a language that is obviously coastal and thence includes a number of words which are Arabic, Adam is actually asserting his stance in a debate that has its roots in the colonial period. He is asserting the right to a language by those who currently feel marginalized, pushed outside their spheres of influence.

Historically, people who come from the hinterland tended to have a mother-tongue that was different from Swahili. For instance those from Morogoro would speak *luguru* as their mother-tongue, those from Dodoma would speak *gogo* and those from Kilimanjaro would speak *chagga*. It needs to be pointed out that this culture is disappearing in the cities. One finds that those from Dar es Salaam for instance, no matter which region they come from originally, would tend to speak Swahili as their mother-tongue. But for Adam the fact remains that Swahili has been the mother-tongue of the coastal peoples for centuries, and Adam, a Swahili from Tanga whose mother-tongue is Swahili, believes himself justified in this argument.

Adam's stance can be understood by tracing Swahili as a religious language. Topan (1992:334-5), points out that the 'formulation of Islamic theological concepts in Swahili' was done prior to the Christian ones and thence this chronological priority was to play an important role in the usage of Swahili, especially as concerns religious texts. This is reiterated by Mazrui and Mazrui (1999:6) who advance that 'at first

there was reluctance on the part of some missionaries to use Kiswahili since it had been so substantially associated with Islam'. Bishop Steere in Zanzibar published gospels in Kiunguja, the Swahili dialect used on the island of Zanzibar. This choice would later be a point of contention between Steere and his colleague, Roehl, who was based in the mainland. Topan (1992) explains that Roehl saw the Kiunguja dialect as characterized with too much Arabism, thence linked it to Islamic ideals. The German administration came to the same conclusion; they regarded Swahili as 'a reservoir of Islamic spirit and a dangerously potential agent for inter-ethnic unity against German rule' (Mazrui and Mazrui, 1995:39). Roehl translated his version of the bible using what he understood to be Swahili used in the mainland. To him, his ecumenical purposes could only be achieved through what he saw as a neutral dialect of Swahili. Thus, according to Topan (1992), the phrase 'blessed are...' from Matthew 5 was translated by Roehl as '*wenyi shangwi*' which means 'those making a demonstration of rejoicing'. Steere's version produced in Zanzibar translates this as *wa kheri* which means 'people of happiness or blessedness'. This becomes complicated for Roehl when he translates the verses and then his meaning is interpreted as 'those making a demonstration of rejoicing mourn' or 'those making a demonstration of rejoicing are meek!' – one can only imagine the confusion that this created. Roehl's translation was criticized as being a mistranslation. In this instance, he had not wanted to use the term '*wa kheri*' since the root word *kheri* is of Arabic origin.

This argument is also posited by Mulokozi when he laments the fact that he can not understand a number of Swahili poems where 'some of the *tenzi* written...are so full of Arabic words and borrowings that it becomes impossible for one not conversant with Arabic to get to their full meaning' (Mulokozi, 1974:133). And Mulokozi views this kind of writing as a reflection of colonial mentality in which one

creates ‘based on old Arabic and Persian epics e.g...*Hamziya* is, for an African with his own history and ancestral heroes and cultural values, the height of absurdity. It reflects the extent to which that person has been ‘assimilated’ by the colonizer’ (ibid).

On the other hand, since the intended audience of the 1929 Edition were the youth, the language used was also oriented towards them. It needs to be noted that Brenn was translating at the brink of the standardization of Swahili orthography. Prior to this standardization the transcription of Swahili varied from region to region. Similarly, many wrote using the Arabic script. Thus the Interterritorial language committee undertook the mammoth task of standardizing the language using the Roman script. The Kiunguja dialect was chosen towards this sort of orthographical unification. The words used for writing were to be those agreed by the inter-territorial committee which means that writers and translators had to use words that conformed to the recommended terminologies. Since the language was being standardized books were needed in this new standard Swahili and this is where translation comes in. Thus many books were ‘written or translated into Swahili...forwarded to two of the committee’s Readers for perusal, comment, and suggestion, thus ensuring the uniform standard orthography as decided by the committee as a whole’ (Whiteley, 1969:84). Brenn and Johnson’s translation was among the books that had to be checked for uniformity. It may be for this reason that at times, the standard Kiunguja dialect used reads quite mechanical.

Nevertheless, there is extensive use of oral devices where the protagonists often address the audience. Some of the oral terminologies used are for instance, when writing that the hunchback is dead he writes: ‘*amekufa fo*’ (1929, Vol 2:182) – the word ‘*fo*’ is a kind of repetitive saying, such as ‘zzz in sleep’. Similarly structured words are uttered by Sindbad during his sixth journey when he says ‘*hazina nazo zilizaa furi-furi*’ (1929, Vol 2: 160) meaning, ‘it was full of treasures’. These words,

‘fo’ and ‘furi-furi’ reiterates the actions and are also used to strengthen oral narrations. Similarly there is extensive usage of oral expressions such as ‘toba’, ‘baa’ ‘wee’ (1929, Vol 2:177-182).

Brenn’s usage of terms that are typically from Unguja is of course the result of standardization. For instance, in Sindbad the Sailor’s tales, his turns of phrase are typically those used in Zanzibar: ‘*akatoa udhuru*’, meaning, ‘he excused himself’, ‘*wakazidi kumshurutisha*’, ‘they continued to beg him’, (1929, vol 2: 2). The translator also uses Arabic words such as ‘*la*’ which means ‘no’. The common Swahili word is ‘*hapana*’. Similarly, he uses a lot of turns of phrase that are largely used on the islands, these include ‘*maadam*’ (1929, Vol 2:160) which means ‘if’.

Both translators use a lot of direct speech. In Brenn, this can be interpreted as a reflection of his given audience. Adam uses direct speech to ground his narrative whereas Brenn uses it to develop the action. Brenn’s usage is quite similar to that of dialogue in drama or a comic. Consider the following example:

BRENN: ‘*Mwacheni akae, kwa sababu ametufurahisha sana*’. Zubeda akajibu ‘*dada kiwa wapenda wewe haya...*’ Kisha akamgeukia mchukuzi na kumwambia. ‘*kama ukikaa lazima...*’ (1929, Vol 1: 26-27) – ‘let him stay because he had really amused us’, Zubeda replied ‘sister if you like....’ Then she turned to the porter and said, ‘if you stay it is imperative...’

ADAM: ‘...*baada ya kushauriana, wakakubaliana abaki nao kwani waliamini huenda akawafurahisha zaidi na kuwastarehesha usiku ule*’ (Vol 1: 90).

‘... after debating, they agreed that that he remain with them because they believed that he would probably amuse them even more and repose them that night’.

Undoubtedly Brenn’s action tends to move through dialogue and direct speech. This kind of reading may be less taxing for the young who might find narratives monotonous. Similarly, in regards to this audience, Brenn does not tire of amusing

his. We find, for instance, he often grabs given chances to use the prefix *ki* in front of verbs. This is a language structure that purposely belittles and marginalizes the wicked characters, for instance, he writes *kizee kile kibalaa kikajibu, kile kitumishi cha kiyonani kikawa kinakuja* (1973, Vol 2: 58). This kind of structure is oral and generally used for children. It is also comical. Thus, in the above examples, images of a funny, evil, dry and wretched old lady and that of a skinny evil girl walking towards the speaker are evoked, respectively.

Other examples of the language and style used by the two translations are visible through their usage of Swahili sayings which show a tendency of domesticating. Adam inserts expressions such as *Subira huvuta heri*, ‘Patience leads to Victory’, *tamaa ya fisi*, ‘hyena’s lust’ and *ahadi ni deni*, ‘a promise is a debt’. And Brenn uses some typical Zanzibar sayings such as *mzuri kama mwezi arobataashara* (1929, Vol 2:188) – ‘as beautiful as the crescent moon’. The Swahili, similar to Orientals, also associate beauty with the moon and stars. Thus the crescent moon, which gives a bright and shiny reflection and is linked to delicate beauty.

In praise to Adam’s recent output, Walter Bgoya³³, his publisher, advanced that his reason for publishing the work lay not only in the fact that it is a work of great enjoyment for all ages, and that, not being an ideological book, its integration, which started decades ago, would be complete, but because the language used by Adam, its structure and phrases would be enjoyed by all ages and would develop the richness of Swahili literature.

4.7.1.1 Refractions

An important stylistic form that has been employed is abridgements. This is a strategy that features in the majority of translations that were undertaken during the colonial

³³ Interviewed in Dar es Salaam, 7th November 2006

era. They are a form of what Lefevere (2000:235) refers to as ‘refractions’ which he defines as ‘the adaptations of a work of literature to a different audience, with the intention of influencing the way in which that audience reads the work’.

In comparison to the English translations, the Swahili version by Brenn appears quite heavily abridged. The translators only chose some stories for translation. One does not need to peruse the books to see this. On first glance it is apparent that each of the four Swahili volumes has an average of 70 pages whereas from the English version, Burton’s first volume alone has 362 pages. This means that the whole of *The Nights* as translated by Brenn would not even fit in Burton’s first of ten volumes.

Similarly, although Adam’s translation includes tales that have hitherto not been translated into Swahili, Adam does point out that he did not translate the entire *Nights*. His reason is:

*Kwanza nasoma hadithi, halafu nachagua zile ambazo haziingilii mambo ya dini au mambo ya anasa za mapenzi zilizo wazi! Hisia za watu bado hazijakubaliana na mambo haya siku hizi!!*³⁴

I first read the tales, and then I choose those that do not interfere with religion and overt eroticism. People’s emotions are still not on par with these issues these days!

Adam was therefore very conscious of what is acceptable or tolerated in the Swahili milieu and he therefore chose the tales that he thought would be acceptable to the target audience. We here have the first hint of the strategies that were employed by Adam; he wanted to produce a re-translations that would not simply be better than the initial translations, but in his translations, he aimed at acceptability as opposed to adequacy.

Having said that, it also needs to be pointed out that Adam does not inform his audience that he has employed a kind of refraction; instead his translation is marketed

³⁴ From an interview with Hassan Adam, 9th March 2008.

as a complete version of *The Nights*. The fact that Adam is not very forthcoming is not a norm in Swahili translations. On the other hand, it is common to find translator's notes at the beginning of Swahili translations informing the audience that abridgement was used for instance. An example of this is the translation of Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883) into *Kisiwa chenye Hazina* (1943) where the translator, Frereric Johnson (1943: v), informs his audience that '*nimefupisha kidogo na kuitafsiri kwa ruhusa ya...*', 'I have summarized this slightly and have translated through the permission of...' Translators have also tended to do this when there has been a genre switch, for instance, the translation of poetry into prose. An example of this is Hemedi el Buhri's 'Diwan of el Buhri' by J.W.T. Allen. The work portrays the German conquest of the Swahili coast in 1891AD, *Vita vya Mdachi kutamalaki Mrima 1307 AH*. Allen (1955:5) notifies his audience, 'I have translated freely and to anyone who wishes to compare the translation with the original I must observe that I have deliberately omitted much repetition', his reason being that a faithful translation would have been tedious in prose.

The strategy of abridging has ofcourse not gone unnoticed among Swahili critics. We find for instance Ohly (1981:4) criticising the fact that only fragments of works are rendered into Swahili. Similarly, the following is yet another critique:

no excuse for omitting altogether what may be foreign, but what is at least explicable to the second culture, and yet we find in some Swahili translations, whether of the classics or in the modern mass media, that the translators have taken the easy way of omitting what is difficult to translate (Harries, 1970:28).

It is not always the case that translators omit simply because it is the easier option, sometimes omission is the only option due to the translator's style, change of genre, finances and change in audience. Omission takes place because there can never be perfect hegemony between the source work and its translation. 'Choices must be

made by the translator; there are additions and omissions in the process, no matter how skilled the translator' (Tymozkco, 1999:23).

In Brenn's translation, the refractions are done using various strategies. For instance, in regards to the style, the poetry is completely absent. This is also the case with Adam's translation; he too has omitted all the poetry. Brenn did not include most of the tales that were told within other tales. For instance, in the frame story the Vizier tells his daughter 'the tale of the bull and the ass'; this is not included in Brenn's translation. From 'the Hunchback's tale', the story told by the Christian broker, the one told by the Jewish physician, the first four stories of the Barber's four brothers are all not included. It is only the fifth and sixth stories of the Barber's brothers that are included. Using this trend where only some tales were chosen for translation led to the Brenn/Johnson's editions being abridged.

The translators also used a strategy that I would like to call 'short-circuiting'. This happens when details are summarized and only the gist is offered. The action is understood to be short-circuited³⁵ when the deeds and adventures of the heroes are not recounted in detail. For instance, Brenn's descriptions are shortcircuited through an elimination of adjectives that he may have viewed as unnecessary and either cut them off or simply offered a summary of what was meant to be brought across. A good example of this can be seen in the tale of the *Ebony Horse*. Burton (1885) starts by describing the King's 'wealth and dominion', 'wit, wisdom and generosity', 'his three daughters whose beauty was similar to full moons or bright flowers and a son...'. He introduces the kingdom, viceroys and the people prior to any mention of the events that led to the theme of the tale. On the other hand, Brenn starts off with narrating that on a New Year's Day, at the end of abundant festivities, an Indian introduced a miraculous black horse who then set off the action of the tale. Thus

³⁵ Candidate's own term.

Brenn does not describe the King's wisdom or his court and achieves his goal by doing away with the frivolous beginnings that characterize many translations of *The Nights*. Consider another example where the Queen is described:

BURTON: 'His brothers wife who was wondrous and fair, a model of beauty and comeliness and symmetry and perfect loveliness who paced with the grace of a gazelle which panteth for the cooling stream (Vol 1: 6).

BRENN: '*mke ambaye alimpenda bila kiasi*' (vol 1: 2) - a wife that he loved immensely.

Brenn also short-circuits on the action and keeps descriptions to a minimal therefore ends with a shorter product. For example, in the story of the young king of the black islands, the whole action about the Prince killing the slave, the wife building a museleum for her lover and the latter turning her husband into half man half stone is presented in one paragraph. Similarly, Brenn also only translates half of the tale of the adventure of Kamarlzaman and Badoura. He concludes the tale right in the middle of the original English tale.

This short-circuiting is also employed by Johnson who translates *Kisiwa chenye Hazina* (1943). We find that, for instance, whereas in the original work Stevenson (1993:15) writes 'Squire Trelawney, Dr Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down...' Johnson translates this as '*mabwana wengine wameniomba niandike*' (pg 1) – (Some gentlemen have asked me to write). Johnson omits all the names of the particular gentlemen who have requested that a book be written. It is through these strategies that he arrives at an abridged version.

Hypothetically, various reasons may have made Brenn and Johnson employ such a strategy. The main reason is linked with their audience. Since their primary audience was expected to be the youth, it is possible that tales that would befit these were chosen. These tales were published as part of the colonial government's

endeavour to have Swahili works available for the schools. Harries (1970) explains that the colonial system was criticized for not having appropriate teaching materials in the African context. Translations from the classics ensued and ‘all of these translations were of books intended originally for children...’ (Harries, 1970:28). Harries lists books by Lewis Carroll, Daniel Defoe and Rider Haggard amongst others. Thus, even books such as *The Nights*, which was not intended for children’s consumption in the West was adapted towards children. Harries (1970) points out that the translations were ‘intended for the younger African generation there can be no doubt’ (ibid, 29). It is for this reason that tales that had aspects considered of adult nature or inadequate were edited out.

The criteria for choosing the tales could also have been based on the interpretation of acceptability as perceived by his young audience on an intellectual and cultural level. Brenn and Johnson may have selected tales that were already circulating in oral forms. This said, it is interesting that tales that feature Abu Nuwas are not present in the Swahili versions. This may be due to the fact that Abu Nuwas had already been adapted in the Swahili and his character in *The Nights*, especially as it is linked to homosexuality, could not have been acceptable in the Swahili milieu.

Another reason for refracting could be financial. The committee which made these selections had a set ‘annual budget of 2,000 in 1930 rising to 2200 in 1951’ (Whiteley, 1969:88).³⁶ When one considers the targets that it had set for itself as regards the standardization, publication and revision of books, it is most probable that they could only afford to translate and publish a selection of hand picked tales.

Another hypothesis is built on Brenn’s level of education. It is possible that his training or lack of, in translation, made it impossible for him to do a complete ‘word for word’ or ‘faithful’ translation. Putting forward the idea that Lane (1838 –

³⁶ The currency used has not been specified by Whiteley but I believe it must have been the Sterling since this was done at the height of the British Empire.

40) or Burton (1885) were the probable original sources, it is also probable that Brenn could not find sufficient vocabulary to work with in Swahili. Some of the experiences that he had to bring across were alien to the Swahili or, there is also the probability that some of the English vocabulary that were used by Burton eluded him.

Abridgement is a strategy that has been used in most of the translations that were undertaken during the colonial period. This is visible in *Elisi katika nchi ya ajabu* (1940), and *Safari za Gulliver* (1932) among others; although, in some circumstances, this fact is not obvious to the Swahili reader. In the Introduction to *Safari za Gulliver* (1932), Johnson reiterates the argument above where he announces,

Nitakua sina budi kufupisha habari kwa kuwa hadithi hii ni ndefu sana. Hadithi inaanzia kusimulia habari za utoto wake Gulliver. Na safari alizozifanya ni nne lakini hapa nitasimulia habari za safari mbili tu.

Gloss: I have no option but to summarize/abridge the information because this story is too long. The story begins with a narration of Gulliver's childhood. He has done four voyages but I will hereby only recount two of the voyages.

This leads us to another hypothesis for the abridgement of *The Nights*. One of the most probable hypotheses is that the tales were simply considered too long. During an interview with Rabia Hamdani³⁷ who was educated during the colonial period and was one of the first women from Zanzibar to pursue further studies at a University abroad,³⁸ it was obvious in her opinion that the colonial government had made a conscious decision to abridge. She pointed out that the state probably decided that since its intended audience were the young Swahili, long translations would have been tiresome. In her view, this decision made an impromptu judgement on the level of translation to be consumed by its receptor audience because that very first batch of prose translation was in reality embraced by the society at large, irrespective of age. This is a reiteration of Harries (1970:29) who in his discussion about the concessions

³⁷ Interview held in Zanzibar, 6th November 2006.

³⁸ Haile Selassie I, Ethiopia.

made to the African audience stresses the fact that ‘...by translating only what they thought could be understood by African children they were detracting from the original and doing their readers a disservice’. Rabia Hamdani informed me that her mother, the late Salama Rubeya, was born in Kilwa at the end of the First World War and had never had the opportunity to go to school, but, similar to many women of her time, she was curious about the written word. She wanted to read. Thus, she initially employed a young school boy to teach her how to read and with time her children improved her reading capacity. She read and re-read the Swahili translations and almost knew all the words in the stories. Her favourite work was *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929). Interestingly, she came to see the movie from ‘King Solomon Mines’ later in life but always insisted that the written Swahili ‘original’ was much better! One can only imagine how captivated this lady would have been had the translation been a complete work rather than an abridged version. Unarguably, these works had a much larger audience than probably intended by the colonial administration. The fact that there was such an interest in them shows that they were highly appreciated which is most probably one of the reasons for its status and primary position in the Swahili Polysystem.

Discussing the characteristics of these translations, Mazrui (2007:159) argues that the English classics translated during the colonial period were largely used as readers in schools thus they ‘retained an exclusively ‘foreign’ identity in the Swahili literary imagination’. This situation changed with political conditions whereby, on the eve of independence, ‘English classics also came to acquire a new value and meaning in the world of Swahili literature’. Part of the explanation for this is ‘the shortage of texts especially plays and novels’ (ibid) during that time meant that translated materials had to be appropriated. One has to remember that poetry is the traditional Swahili genre. Novels and plays were introduced during the colonial period and were

thus a relatively new phenomenon. Mazrui (ibid) continues to argue that ‘this contrasts sharply with translations of Arabic classics such as *Hamziyya* and *Alfu lela ulela* (The Thousand and One Nights)’. According to him, these were absorbed readily and became Swahili literature, despite the foreign origins of the translators. This reminds us of Even-Zohar’s argument that it is not always possible to determine the starting point of interference since durable contacts simply facilitate this interference (Even-Zohar, 2005:58).

Despite that, I would contend with Mazrui’s argument about the supposed ‘Arabic classics’, especially *Alfu lela ulela* which has captured the imaginations of peoples across the world for centuries has only recently caught the serious attention of Arabic scholars. It was only at a conference held in Fez in 1979 that Arabic scholars’ interest was sparked. Prior to that, although Galland’s translation had triggered a series of European and later world interest, Arab academia dismissed it as coffee house reading. Thus it was only in the 1980’s that there happened a floodgate of interest from the Arab world. However, despite the status of *The Nights* in the Arab world, they have been an important part of the Swahili literary polysystem, initially as folklore and then for decades as canons. Thus, by the time Brenn and Johnson published their translation, they were simply rendering into the written what was already familiar. It is this fact that has made Adam’s recent work easily absorbed and an instant hit among the Swahili. The case of *Hamziyya* is different since, being a religious text, it is recited in every *maulid*. It is a classic only to the Muslims and has been part of the coastal Swahili socialization process for centuries.

The Nights Swahili translation as a particular English classic was introduced to a people that had, for centuries, assimilated, adopted and appropriated foreign literatures. For this reason, and due to the fact it was rendered in Swahili, their mother tongue, I would argue that the translation could not have contained an exclusively

foreign identity. How could it be perceived as exclusively foreign by a people to whom foreign was the norm?

It was not the ‘shortage of texts’ as Mazrui (2007) points out, that made translations such as *The Nights* part of the Swahili corpus, but rather, they were part of the corpus since their inception. I essentially believe that the translations that were undertaken during the colonial era, which are actually the first foreign prose, apart from the Swahili chronicles, have actually been part of the Swahili literary identity from the time of their inception³⁹ and they are now Swahili classics.

Thus it seems that, despite the fact that the majority of translations undertaken during the colonial period were refracted, they have been accepted and intergrated into the Swahili polysystem. In fact, some critics, including Mazrui (2007) argue that these works are in essence Swahili literature.

4.7.2 Portrayal of Culture

Culture is a very important concept in Descriptive Translation Studies. Toury (1995) argues that translation is a fact in the target culture, firmly pinning down the concept’s importance. This has been discussed at length in Chapter Two of this study where we have explained the move from prescriptive language oriented translation to translation as culture and politics giving translation a ‘cultural turn’ (Snell-Hornby (1990:79-86). This is ofcourse the metaphor for translation’s move beyond language and into its interaction with culture as well as the way in which culture impacts and constrains it and subsequently moving on to the much broader issues of context, history and convention.

³⁹ One of the main reasons for their absorption is that, they were also adapted for a radio audience which popularised them. Salha Hamdani, educationist of Zanzibari origin informed me that she remembers the whole family gathering to listen to a certain Haidar Jabir on *sauti ya Zanzibar* (Radio Zanzibar). The latter would recount adventures of Allan Quarterman and Gagula, the witch in *King Solomon Mines*. Gagula’s infamous notoriety was to become part of Swahili folktales. Tales from *The Nights* ruled the airwaves for years, amusing and holding its audience in suspense.

The Swahili translators have strived to portray the society of *The Nights* as a melting pot. Brenn and Johnson and Adam all distinguish characters as *Myonani*, ‘Greek’, *Myahudi*, ‘Jew’, *Mkristo*, ‘Christian’, *Mwislamu*, ‘Muslim’. The division of labour where the upper class of Arabs and Asiatic peoples and the lower class of slaves is represented; except for the eunuchs. Neither Brenn nor Adam refer to them, they only refer to *watumwa*, *watumishi* and *wajakazi*. A castrated man in the Swahili society is immoral. There are castrated animals, for instance a castrated ox is called a ‘*maksai*’ but there is no such thing as a castrated man. This lack of equivalence has led to the omission of these characters in the entire translation.

The vast array of themes prevalent in *The Nights* can be said to cover the entire human experiences. Among these are the themes of love, death, immortality, eroticism and sexuality, the concept of religion which encompasses issues of infinity, prophecies, destiny and providence. There is a very strong presentation of the theme of power and how this functions in a socio-political context. Similarly, the supernatural where demons, witches and tyrannical Kings exist side by side is yet another theme that is prevalent in the tales.

For the purposes of this study, I chose four cultural themes. These themes are built around issues that have always played a central position among the Swahili. These themes include those of religion, race and identity, the supernatural as well as the portrayal of eroticism. These themes have been important factors in the Swahili society; for instance, with reference to race and identity: are the Swahili black Africans, brown Africans or Orientals, what is their identity? We find that most Swahili people proudly claim ancestry to Oman and Yemen. This Arabness is linked to prestige even to date. One’s colour does not determine their identity; it is their genes so to speak. It is very common to find an African looking black man in Mombasa or Zanzibar claiming that they are Arab; as long as one can link their

paternal heritage to the Arab world, they are Arab. Similarly religion plays a very important role and is linked to identity; often this is more than one's race. Similarly issues of eroticism and sexuality are concepts that range between being taboo and controversial. It is the portrayal of these themes that greatly interested me and were instrumental in my decision to look at the translation of these themes as opposed to commenting and analysing individual tales.

4.7.2.1 Religion

Mahdi (1995), whose rendition of *The Nights* has been acclaimed as the closest to the original, writes that although the tales, specifically the frame story, takes place in the royal house of the sassanids,

The stories were written or rewritten in Islamic times. Their functional time is the past, a past that covers the history of the revealed religions, at least from the time of Solomon. Yet they are enclosed in a frame story that places their narrator outside the times and lands of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They are narrated by a wise heathen girl to a heathen king in heathen times (Mahdi, 1995:127).

The Sassanid rulers are understood to have ruled over the lands of Samarkand which is a historical city that dates back to the silk route and is in the current Uzbekistan, India and china. Mahdi (1995) continues to argue that 'tentatively, one may say that the overall subject matter of *The Nights* is the history of the relation between heathen royalty and the revealed religions' (ibid). It needs to be asserted that, that is only part of the overall picture because the latter does not reveal the totality of the social relationships between the different actors depicted in *The Nights*.

Mahdi (1995) offers a description of the symbolism involved in the frame story to show how religion has been used as an instrument by the women of substance against the King. Mahdi (1995) explains that, for instance, Dinarzad's name means 'of noble religion' and Shahrazad's means 'of noble race' in Persian. Nevertheless,

‘noble religion’ arouses the king’s desire to hear the stories, and thenceforth, ‘noble race’ heals the king by narrating them. This symbolism would be lost to the Swahili reader, just like any reader of *The Nights*’ translations world wide. On the other hand, the Swahili reader would understand religion as depicted in the first tale, ‘the Merchant and the jinni’.

‘The Merchant and the jinni’ is a tale that involves a wealthy merchant who was pious and who adhered to all his religious duties but found himself in a dangerous situation. During one of his travels in a foreign land, he came across a big tree next to a stream and decided to rest. This was in the middle of the day. He made his horse drink then sat under the tree’s shadow. He then decided to eat his dates, the pits of which he threw around. Afterwards he did his ablutions and performed the afternoon Islamic prayer. Suddenly a terrible demon appeared, sword in hand aiming to kill him. The reason that he gives is that one of the merchant’s pits hit his son in the eye and killed him on the spot. The merchant begged for forgiveness, pleading with him that the latter had been invisible; it was not done on purpose. The jinni demanded revenge. Under the Sharia (an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth), he had all the rights to revenge. The merchant found himself in a dilemma, the jinni ‘demands his legal right under the religious law to avenge the blood of his son by murdering the merchant’ (Mahdi 1995:131). The merchant pleads that the law could not function between the visible and invisible beings. We see here that ‘the demon and the powers he represents seem to be intent on the destruction of a pious man and the subversion of religion and the divine law’ (ibid).

In the end, the merchant receives a year’s grace from the jinni for which he uses to tie up loose ends; he gives ‘alms’, *sadaka*, deals with the issues of inheritance as required by Islamic law. Since he had sworn in God’s name that he would return to the jinni after a year, he does so. Luckily for him, three old men pass by, one holding

a gazelle, one holding two black dogs and one holding a donkey. When the jinni arrives, each of these old men offers to tell their stories to save the merchant. At the end the merchant is forgiven and he returns home.

‘The three tales are meant to cure the demon’s passion for vengeance, counteract the higher law to which he has appealed, and serve as a substitute for the religious law, which has been rendered inoperable by the demon (ibid, 132). It needs to be remembered that Islam acknowledges the existence of the invisible beings such as the jinni. This bears bearing on the fact that, in many Islamic cultures, it is discouraged to be out and about at midday. I remember as a child especially in Zanzibar and Pemba, it was greatly discouraged to be out and about at midday, if one had to be out, then it was forbidden to linger under trees such as the baobab for instance. This is so because it is believed that the jinni lives in those trees and at those times, they would be returning from the mosque.

This tale has been translated differently by Brenn and Adam. In Brenn’s translation, after eating, the merchant goes to wash his hands in the stream, he does not perform the ablutions nor does he pray. And when he begs to be given time so he may tie loose ends, he says, ‘*nakupa **ahadi yangu** kuwa nitarudi tu, bila shaka*’ (Vol 1:5), ‘I give you **my word** that without doubt, I will return’. His gentleman promise is accepted by the demon. On the other hand, in Adams’ translation we are informed that ‘*aliposhiba, akanyanyuka, akaenda kwenye ile chemchemi, akanawa mikono, akasukutua mdomo, **akatawadha, akaswali swala ya adhuhuri***’ (Vol 1: 14), ‘once satisfied, he rose, and went to the stream, he washed his hands, gurgled through his mouth, **performed his ablutions and prayed the dhuhhr prayers**’. Later, when he pleads to be given time, he swears by saying, ‘*naapa kwa jina la **Mwenyezi Mungu na masahaba wake wote***’ (Vol 1: 17), ‘I swear in the name of the **Almighty God and all His companions / prophets**’. Adam’s translation makes it obvious that the

merchant is a Muslim, not only by the fact that he does his ablutions and prays the dhuhur prayers, but also he refers to God as *Mwenyezi Mungu*. Had the merchant been Christian, the terms *Mungu* or *Bwana* or *Baba* would have been preferred, these derive from the concept of trinity in Christianity that is *Mungu Baba*, ‘God the father’, *Mungu Mwana*, ‘God the Son’ and *Roho Mtakatifu*, ‘Holy Spirit’.

Topan (1994) explains that with the introduction of Islam, the Bantu word *Mngu* was seen to be insufficient to convey the potency of the Islamic term, Allah. The term *Mwenyezi* was therefore prefixed to it. Farouk Topan explains that *Mwenyezi* is a compound word derived from the Swahili word *Mwenye* which means possessor and the Arabic element *ezi* derived from *izza* which means power and might. *Mwenyezi* is defined in the TUKI Swahili – English Dictionary (2001) as ‘Almighty’.

Adam’s translation is actually more in accordance with both Haddawy (1990) and Burton’s (1885) translations in that it reflects religion. Haddawy (1990:17) translates ‘then he got up, performed his ablutions and performed his prayers’ and while pleading he swears ‘I swear to keep pledge to come back, as the God of Heaven and earth in my witness’ (ibid). At this juncture, it needs to be remembered that Mahdi’s (1984) work and the subsequent translation by Haddawy (1990) has been acknowledged as the nearest to the Syrian manuscripts. This does not mean that Adam’s Swahili translation is much more correct but rather Brenn has purposely aligned his translation towards secularism. This is especially the case since the work that is supposed to be its source, Burton’s translation, is quite explicit in its portrayal of religion. Burton (1885) goes all out in the merchants pleading where he writes that the latter says: ‘verily from Allah we proceed and unto Allah are we returning. There is no Majesty and there is no might save in Allah, the glorious the Great’ (Vol 1:25). Nevertheless, it should be noted that Brenn does use terms that may be regarded as

having an Islamic orientation such as *Mwenyezi Mungu*, although his spelling is the archaic '*Mwenyiezi Mungu*' (Vol 2:174). I would argue that Brenn's usage of such terms may simply be linked to the fact that the terms are common in the Kiunguja dialect which has been used as standard Swahili. Although it may also be the case that this was Brenn's subtle way of acknowledging that the God in question is Allah.

Let us consider another example from 'the Adventures of Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess Badoura', translated as *Kisa cha Kamarazaman, Badoura na Hayat al Nufus* by Adam and *Mambo yaliyompata Kamarazaman na Badoura Binti Mfalme* by Brenn, since this is one of the tales where religion plays a central role. The centrality of religion is obvious in Adam's translation. He includes a number of Islamic references such as *Inna lillahi wa inna ilahi Raji'un*, a phrase that is pronounced upon hearing of a death. It is an expression from the Quran is Surat Al-Buqara verse number 156 which means 'Surely we belong to Allah and to Him shall we return'. Adam uses this phrase without explaining its meaning since he expects the Swahili to be familiar with it. Similarly, since the protagonists in the story are Muslims, phrases such as '*Allahu aalim*', '*Inshallah*' and so forth are widely used. For instance, King Ghajur asks, '*kijana gani ya Rabil alamina aliyelala humu?*' (Vol 3: 20), 'Which young man *Rabil alamina* slept here?' *Rabil alamina* is a phrase that means 'the Lord of the Al'amin who are all the mankind, jinn and everything that exists'.

Again, in Adam's translation the characters have a certain link to each other as believers, for instance Bustana saves Asad from being sacrificed by her father and his fellow witches who believe in the Sun. She saves him because as a Muslim convert herself, she feels fraternal towards him. They later marry. This entire section of the tale is not included in Brenn's translation.

Similarly, in the tale of Sindbad's seventh journey, Sindbad's faith is highly tested. Adam presents Sindbad uttering his strongest religious conviction when he is in trouble by saying: '*hakuna mwenye nguvu na uwezo isipokua Mwenyezi Mungu*' (Vol 2:189), 'There is no one who is mighty and powerful except the almighty God'. This phrase is a very common Islamic expression often uttered when someone is in trouble, in Arabic the wording is: '*la hawla wa la quwatta illa billah*'. Later on Sindbad goes through an adventure with the winged disbelievers who can not mention the word God and in the end he meets believers in Islam who praise their monotheism by saying: '*sisi ni waabudu wa Mwenyezi Mungu wa kweli*' (Vol 2:189), 'we are believers of the one true God'.

The religious oriented choices made by Adam can be seen in the following comparison where, for instance, in Sindbad's fifth voyage, after he escapes from the terrifying bird, Brenn writes '*nilipata bahati nzuri ya kuibuka tena...*', 'I was lucky enough to rise again...', whereas Adam writes '*kwa uwezo wa Mwenyezi Mungu mimi nilinusurika*', 'Through the power of the almighty Allah I was saved'. Then, Sindbad comes upon a garden which Brenn describes as '*bustani nzuri kulikokua na miti iliyozaa matunda na maua kochokocho, na kijito cha maji safi meupe kama kioo yakipita chini ya vivui vyao*' (Vol 2: 28), 'a beautiful garden with plentiful fruit trees under which crossed a small stream whose water was as clear as a mirror'. Adam describes the garden on the island as '*kizuri mithili ya bustani ya Eden!*' (Vol 2: 172), 'as beautiful as the garden of Eden'.

A close analysis of both Adam's and Brenn's translations makes it obvious that Brenn used Burton's translation as his original for the above mentioned passages. This is because Brenn's wording is reflective of Burton's translation. Burton refers to Sindbad walking about the island, and finding it as one of the garths and gardens of Paradise (it is this sentence that made Adam interpret it as the garden of Eden).

Burton then describes that there were trees in abundance bearing ripe-yellow fruits and streams ran clear and bright, flowers were fair to scent and to sight, and birds warbled with delight the praises of Him to whom belong Permanence and All-might. Thus, it seems that, in principle, Brenn tried to be faithful in his translation. In some sections, Brenn's translation is almost a literal word to word translation of Burton's but wherever he came upon expressions that were religious, he simply secularized them.

I would have been tempted to argue that Brenn and Johnson wanted to efface traces of Islamic oriented expressions since they were themselves Christians but I do not think that, that is the case. I base my judgement following their other translations. For instance, in their translation of *King Solomon Mines* (1885) into *Mashimo ya Mfalme Sulemani* (1929), there is a section where a dying man calls out 'Water! for the sake of Christ, water!' and Johnson's translation is '*nipeni maji! Jamani maji!*' (1929:10), which means, 'give me water! My goodness sake, Water!' The word *jamani* is an oral expression that can mean 'hey', 'for goodness sake' and 'my goodness' depending on the context in which it is used. It has no religious connotations whatsoever. Brenn and Johnson could have translated the term 'Christ' had they wished but it seems that because the Swahili are largely Muslim and most probably aware that had they rendered the Christian oriented phrases literally, the Swahili would not have emphasized with the characters in the way that they came to, Brenn and Johnson decided to refrain from inclining their works into religion. This strategy separated their translations from missionary translations and also their secularism made the translations appreciated by all.

In the same breath, it needs to be pointed out that Brenn and Johnson did not hesitate to add some linguistic and cultural items that are originally religious but have come to acquire a cultural character. For instance, they use the term 'inshallah' (ibid,

34) which is of Islamic origin and which means ‘If God wills’. The protagonist, Allan Qurterman says ‘inshallah’ after Mr Henry says that if his brother is alive, he will certainly, ‘*lazima*’, see him. The use of inshallah, a term that is extremely common in Swahili certainly brings the text home. A Swahili would never plan for anything without referencing to God. Therefore, one would hardly ever hear people say ‘I will come’ but rather ‘if God wills, I will come’.

Apart from those differences in the orientation of Adam’s and Brenn’s translations, the fact that Brenn was translating during the ‘inception’ of Swahili prose translation is visible in the language choices that he makes. An example of this can be seen through the vocabulary used in tales such as ‘the Barber’s tale of his fifth brother’, Al-Naschar (Spelt Al Nacha in Swahili) is day dreaming about becoming very wealthy and asking the hand of the vizier’s daughter, the most beautiful girl in the land. He dreams that, when going to see the vizier, people would bow to him and: BURTON: I will make the round of the city whilst the folk **salute me and bless me** (vol 1: 336)

BRENN: *Wakati nikipita watu watainamisha macho yao wanisujudie* (Vol 2: 187)

ADAM: ...*watu watakuwa wakiniinamia kwa heshima na kuniamkia kwa unyenyekevu na kuniombea dua na kunisifu* (Vol 2: 105)

The usage of the word *wanisujudie* by Brenn and Johnson is actually neither religious nor culturally sensitive to the Swahili. The root word, *sujudu* means ‘*kugisha paji la uso chini wakati wa kuswali*’ (TUKI Dictionary, 1981), ‘the act of pressing one’s forehead against the ground while praying’. Muslims show their reverence to God by the act of *kusujudu*. This is not done to anyone else but God - Allah. Adam is aware of the sensitivities related to this word thence he goes to the lengths of explaining that ‘people would bow with respect and greet me with obedience while praying for me and praising me’. The phrase *kuniombea dua* makes

it apparent that Adam is very conscious of the fact that prayers are only directed at Allah, God. Adam's translation is also in accordance with Haddawy's translation, '...people salute me and invoke blessings on me' (pg 282). It may be the case that, either this term has come to acquire its exclusivity over time or Brenn and Johnson were unaware of the sensitivities surrounding the word *kusujudu*. Although they may simply have decided to use it so as to show the extreme arrogance that Al Nacha had acquired and came to see himself as a demi-god.

I do not believe that Brenn and Johnson's intentions were to uproot the tales from their Islamic origins but rather they aimed at a work that was secular and thus neutral. In his introduction, Brenn writes that the stories in *The Nights* may have stemmed from the storytellers who enjoyed telling stories that praised the Muslims who lived in Baghdad or the Indian sub-continent - *hadithi za kuwasifu vema waislamu wanaokaa Baghdadi au bara ya hindi* (pg v-vi). Having mentioned this in the introduction, Brenn and Johnson must have felt that they were no longer obliged to remind the audience at each and every opportunity that the characters were Muslims. This is especially so since this choice would mean that their translation would not be attached to any of the linguistic and cultural controversies that were prevalent at the time.

It should be remembered that Brenn and Johnson translated at a time when there were quite a number of disagreements and conflicts in regards to the language and the Swahili dialect used to convey any kind of message. These confrontations are detailed by Topan (1992) who points out that coastal Swahili, especially the Zanzibar dialect, *Kiunguja*, had a number of Arabic expressions which were linked with Moslem ideas.⁴⁰ These ideas were initially perceived as being divergent from the Christian ones (Mazrui and Mazrui, 1999:6). It is for this reason that missionaries

⁴⁰ See above.

from the interior embarked on constructing a Christian oriented Swahili that used Bantu oriented dialects. Both Brenn and Johnson were faithful Christians and one can only imagine the tide they had to swim against so as to portray a secular and neutral work which would be appreciated by the Swahili Muslims on the coast and their audience in the interior of the continent.

We find therefore that there were instances where they use Swahili terms that stem from mainland Tanzania for instance, they translate ‘to admit’ as *kuungama* (1929, Vol 2: 181) which is the specific word that means ‘to give a confession’. They could have used the term *kukiri* which means ‘to admit’. Similarly, they use ‘*mangaribi*’ (1929, vol 2: 182) which is the Bantu oriented pronunciation to mean ‘west’, the standard Swahili version is *magharibi*. These choices are used together with a number of specific Arabisms that are prevalent in the Kiunguja dialect. Thus it is debatable whether one can argue that they were directly opposed to the Arabic orientedness of Swahili.

On the other hand, it seems that Adam continues the tradition of the coastal *ulamaa* who are the traditional Swahili scholars. They held very strong religious convictions and were also very knowledgeable, especially about Islam. Due to this, we find that ‘a significant section of the early written literature of Kiswahili was certainly rich not only in Islamic imagery and allusion, but often also with Islamic theology and catechism’ (ibid, 33). Adam ascertains that his translation is more partisan since it places special emphasis on religion. He told me, ‘when I had to translate religious quotations or items with religious connotations, I had to be very careful’.⁴¹

The differences in translation strategies, especially as seen above, are the very reason for re-translation. We find that Adam’s and Brenn’s perspectives on how certain themes should be portrayed are very different. It is obvious that, with the

⁴¹ From my interview with Adam, 9th March 2008.

intention of placing his translation firmly in the Swahili milieu Adam leans towards religion, specifically by adding religious Islamic expressions that are not necessarily in his source, whereas Brenn is more secular in his translation. He does not emphasize religion but secular culture. It is obviously the Swahili audience that will come to make the penultimate choice on which translation is the better. At this stage, it seems that both translations enjoy positions of prestige in the Swahili polysystem. Adam's translations fly off the shelves as soon as bookshops in Dar es salaam and Zanzibar stock them, and similarly, the re-prints of Brenn's translations have remained a firm favorite through the years.

4.7.2.2 Eroticism

Erotic elements are absent in the 1929 and the 1979 revised translated editions. This is due to various reasons including the levels of tolerance of the target culture and the translators' Christian values and beliefs. Swahili society would frown upon an open discussion on sexual matters. Sexual issues are shrouded in taboo. Sometimes, especially in private, women would talk about these issues, for instance a discussion about sex is part of the teachings given to a bride to be, or a *mwali*, who is a virgin girl having reached puberty. This discussion is referred to as *unyago*. But such talks very intimate and are conducted in private settings. Only married women would be involved and would talk to the girls in question. Also, when there is a large group of the given women, words considered too erotic would be said using metaphors. It is similar for boys when they reach puberty and go for *jando* where they are taught how to be men in society.

Thus, open discussion about sex is regarded as unacceptable. This is the case even to date. In one of my interviews with the translators at the National Swahili

Council, BAKITA⁴² (Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa), the translators gave me an example of a pamphlet that they had to translate for Tanzania AIDS commission / *Tume ya Udhibiti ya Ukimwi*. In this given pamphlet, most of the terms that refer to the reproductive system had to be explicitated, (i.e. explained), since open usage is regarded as culturally unacceptable if not outright taboo. An example that they gave me is the translation of the word, ‘sexually transmitted diseases’. Previously this had been translated as ‘*Magonjwa ya zinaa*’. *Zinaa* means fornication or adultery. The society did not respond well to this and BAKITA now translates this as *Magonjwa ya Kujamiiiana*. *Kujamiiiana* stems from the root word *jamii* which means ‘society’. It is therefore a more polite and acceptable word to refer to the concept.

Given this recent example, one can only imagine how unacceptable it would have been for Brenn to include the erotic elements of *The Nights*. Thus the adultery of Sultan Shahzaman’s wife is not included at all. Needless to say, the two orgies and the encounter between the jinni’s wife and the two Kings have all been omitted. The adultery of King Shahriyar’s wife in the frame story is paraphrased as follows:

BRENN: *Hata siku moja ilikua aibu na huzuni kuu, maana baada ya miaka mingi, kwa bahati akatambua kuwa mkewe alikuwa akimdanganya, na matendo yake yote yaligeuka kuwa maovu hata Sultani akapendezwa kutwaa sheria, na kumwamuru waziri wake mkuu amwue* (1929, Vol 1:1).

Gloss: Until one day it was shameful and extremely sad because, after many years, by chance, he discovered that his wife had **beguiled him and that her behaviour had turned out to be so wicked** that the Sultan preferred to call upon the law and ordered his vizier to kill her.

The revised edition is similar to the 1929 Edition apart from the fact that towards the end of the passage, it says, ‘*sultan akamwamuru waziri wake amwue*’

⁴² Interview held at Dar es Salaam, 3rd December 2004.

meaning the Sultan ordered his vizier to kill her. It needs to be noted that full renderings of the erotic tales of *The Nights* could still be regarded as unacceptable in some sections of society. Despite this, Adam's translation does include the erotic scenes.

ADAM: *Alipoingia ndani, la haula! Akamkuta mkewe amekumbatiwa kimapenzi na mtumwa wake mmoja!*

Gloss: when he entered the house, good heavens!, he found his wife **lovingly embraced** by one of his slaves.

Although the current translation of this passage includes the scene of the orgy; it can not be compared to Burton's translation:

BURTON: ...a postern of the palace which was carefully kept private, swung open and out of it came twenty slave girls surrounding his brother's wife who was wondrous and fair, a model of beauty and comeliness and symmetry and perfect loveliness who paced with the grace of a gazelle which panteth for the cooling stream...they walked under the very lattice and advanced a little way into the garden till they came to a jetting fountain amiddlemost a great basin of water; then **they stripped off their clothes** and behold, ten of them were women, concubines of the King and the other ten were white slaves. Then **they all paired off, each with each:** but the queen was left alone, presently cried out in a loud voice 'here to me O my lord Saeed!' and then sprang with a drop leap from one of the trees a big slobbering blackamoor with rolling eyes which showed the whites, a truly hideous sight. He walked boldly up to her and **threw his arms round her neck while she embraced him as warmly; then he bussed her and winding his legs round hers, as a button-loop clasps a button, he threw her and enjoyed her. On likewise did the other slaves with the girls till all had satisfied their passions, and they ceased not from kissing and clipping, coupling and carousing till day began to wane** (Vol 1: 6).

ADAM:...*mara mlango mmoja ukafunguka na wajakazi ishirini wakiongozana na watumwa ishirini wakatokea. Katikati yao alikuwemo malkia, mke wa kaka yake, ambaye uzuri wake ulikua hauna kifani. Wote arobaini wakelekea moja kwa moja mpaka penye chemichemi ya maji iliyokua ikitiririka. Hapo wakavua nguo, wakakaa majanini. Mara malkia akaita, ‘masud, njoo utekeleze kazi yako’. Mara pandikizi la mtumwa likatokea ambalo, mara tu lilipofika, **likamkumbatia malkia na kufanya naye mapenzi pale bustanini! Wale watumwa wengine nao, hali kadhalika, wakawa wanazini na wale wajakazi. Wakaendelea na mapenzi yao mpaka kulipoanzwa kuchwa...***(Vol 1:3).

Gloss: suddenly one of the doors was swung open and twenty slave girls accompanied by twenty slaves came out. In their middle was the queen, his brothers wife, whose beauty had no comparison. The forty of them went straight to a trickling water fountain. There, **they all undressed**, sat on the grass. Suddenly the queen called out, ‘Masud, come accomplish your task’. Suddenly a huge slave appeared and immediately upon arrival **embraced the queen and made love to her in that garden. Those other slaves as well fornicated with the slave girls. They continued with their love making** until day break.

As previously noted, Brenn omits this passage in his translation. Adam includes it but uses caution. He employs the root word *Penzi*, which means ‘love’ to describe what happens between the queen and the slave as love making as opposed to the crude sexual act. This is much more agreeable to a Swahili reader although it is understood here that the queen is a married woman therefore the act is indecent. Then, Adam’s description of what the slave girls do as *kuzini* makes it apparent that adultery is taking place. Nevertheless, he could not translate the sexual act’s details as described by Burton above nor even by Haddawy (1990) where the black slaves ‘mounted’ the girls and Mas’ud the slave ‘rushed to her, and, raising her legs, went

between her thighs and made love to her. Mas'ud topped the lady, while...' (Haddawy, 1990:5).

Apart from the erotic, it is obvious that there are a few differences between the translations. The overall number of slaves according to Burton and Haddawy is 20 whereas it is 40 in Adam's translation. Burton is explicit about the race of the slaves, Adam is not. The name of the slave who has intercourse with the Queen is Saeed in Burton's translation but Masud in Adam and Haddawy's although Burton does add a footnote that the original name was Mas'ud. Despite the differences and despite the fact that Adam's translation of this passage has excluded some facts, the reader is offered much more detail compared to the previous Swahili translation. In actual fact, by being precautionary, Brenn simply offers the gist of the overall tale. Although much more adventurous as a translator, Adam treads softly, thus the second sexual orgy that takes place with the King Shahriyar and his brother as witnesses is not rendered with too much detail by Adam, he simply refers back to it in the simplest of terms:

ADAM: *Mara malkia na wajakazi **walewale** wakatokea tena wakifuatwa nyuma na watumwa **wale wale**. Walipofika bustanini, **wakayatenda yaleyale** waliyoyatenda siku ile ya kwanza!* (Vol 1:5).

Gloss: Suddenly the queen and the **same slave** girls came out as previously accompanied by the **same slaves**. When they reached the garden, they did the **same deeds** that they had previously done.

We can see here that Adam does not translate this erotic scene in detail. He only refers back to the 'same deed' that had previously taken place. Thus the Swahili reader is not informed that the black slave, Mas'ud, proudly announces that his name is Sa'ad al-Din Mas'ud. This second part of the meeting between the queen and her

lover has had a number of interpretations, one of them being that it has religious symbolism.⁴³

The sexual adventure of the Jinni's wife in the frame story is also absent in both the 1929 Edition and The Revised Edition. Adam on the other hand includes it. Adam writes that the Jinni's wife forces the brothers to come and make love to her, '*ni lazima mfanye mapenzi nami sasa hivi tena papa hapa*' (Vol 1: 6), 'you are obligated to make love to me right here and right now'. The wording about the encounter itself is only allusive to the act, '*baada ya kuwalazimisha kufanya alivyotaka, wale ndugu wawili wakabaki naye kwa muda alioutaka*' (Vol 1:6), 'after forcing them to do **what she wanted**, the two siblings remained with her for **the duration of time** that she required'.

This kind of language is similar to that used by Brenn when he refers to erotic scenes, for instance, in the tale of the Barber's fifth brother, Brenn implies that there is physical contact between Al Nacha and the beautiful girl.

BRENN: *Baada ya kuulizana habari ilipokwisha, bibi akamwambia, 'twende chumba kingine maana hapa hatukustarehe' basi wakaondoka kwenda chumba kidogo, ikawa yule bibi kuzungumza naye kwa kitambo* (1973, vol 2:57).

Gloss: After the initial greetings, the lady told him, 'let's go to another room because we are not comfortable here', so they went to the small room, and the lady **conversed with him for a long time**.

In both Adam's and Brenn's translations, the long 'conversations' referred to in *wakabaki naye kwa muda alioutaka* and *kuzungumza naye kwa kitambo*, respectively, imply the erotic through the amount of time spent with a partner. Thus eroticism is implied in the wording. The benefit of such a translation is that children

⁴³ This will be discussed later in this chapter.

can read such passages and not make much of anything; they would only think that the characters are conversing while the adults would understand the deeper allusions.

Another interesting example is seen in ‘the tale of Prince Kamar al Zaman and Princess Badoura’ where, according to Irwin (1994:171), upon being summoned to the King, who is actually his wife disguised as a man, Kamar al Zaman worries about being ‘homosexually raped’. He does not comprehend the reason for the King to summon him and, in Burton’s translation, Badoura delivers a long speech in favour of homosexuality. In Adam’s translation, Kamar al Zaman’s fear is brought across when he asks himself,

ADAM: Kwa nini mfalme anataka kuwa nami peke yangu mle chumbani anamolala na kwa nini ameufunga mlango kwa bawabu? Lolote litakalokuwa na litokee, Mungu yuko!’ (Vol 3: 44).

Gloss: Why does the King want to be alone with me inside the room where he sleeps and why did he put the lock on the door? Whatever happens, happens, God is omnipresent.

He then stands still; away from the one that he thinks is the King and refuses to go near him, saying he can hear whatever the King is saying from their given distances. But when he discovers that the King is actually his wife, ‘*hapo ikawa kizaazaa cha kukumbatiana, kubusiana...*’ (Vol 3: 45), meaning, ‘then ensued a commotion of embracing, kissing...’

In both Brenn’s translation and the Revised Edition this section does not echo Burton’s translation. In Brenn’s translation, the princess innocently shows the Prince the jewel that he had spent years searching. He recognizes it and offers to tell its tale to the one that he thinks is the King, the latter bids him to wait and removes her masculine clothes, he recognizes her and ‘*akamkumbatia kwa mapenzi*’ (1973, Vol 4:33), meaning ‘embraces her with love’.

Brenn and Johnson translated *King Solomon Mines* (1885) into Swahili in the same year as *Alfu lela Ulela*, and there is a section in the novel where Foulata, a beautiful young maiden learns that she is to be offered as sacrifice by the King and Gagula the witch. Scared at the prospect of death, she laments: ‘Woe is me, that no lover shall put his arm around me and look into my eyes, nor shall men children be born of me! Oh, cruel, cruel!’⁴⁴ In Swahili this is translated as ‘*Ole wangu, sipati kupendwa na mwanamume wala kuzaa wana! Ukatili! Ukatili!*’ (1929:102), ‘woe is me, I will never be loved by a man and bear children! Cruel! Cruel!’ It seems almost prudent that Johnson and Brenn could not use the term ‘lover’ and include the fact that this lover would put their arms around a girl. They saw it necessary to imply that marriage was involved and children are born. In the same breath, I find it almost revolutionary that the Swahili translation does not specify the sex of the children. This reminds me of a Swahili saying that says: ‘*mwana ni mwana, la muhimu ni afya*’, ‘a child is a child, what is important is health’, although most people would say this and still hope to have boys rather than girls.

Similar to *Alfu Lela Ulela*, Brenn and Johnson have also omitted the amorous sections in *Mashimo ya Mfalme Sulemani* (1929). Not surprising the following section has not been translated:

‘Say to my lord, Bougwan, that—I love him, and that I am glad to die because I know that he cannot cumber his life with such as I am, for the sun may not mate with the darkness, nor the white with the black’.

‘Say that, since I saw him, at times I have felt as though there were a bird in my bosom, which would one day fly hence and sing elsewhere. Even now, though I cannot lift my hand, and my brain grows cold, I do not feel as though my heart were dying; it is so full of love that it could live ten thousand years, and yet be young. Say that if I live again, mayhap I shall see him in the Stars, and that—I will search them all, though perchance there I should still be black and he would—still be white. Say—nay, Macumazahn, say no more, save that I love—Oh, hold me closer, Bougwan, I cannot feel thine arms—*oh! oh!*’

⁴⁴ <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2166/2166-h/2166-h.htm#chap01>

‘She is dead—she is dead!’ muttered Good, rising in grief, the tears running down his honest face.⁴⁵

The above quoted lament of the dying girl, Foulata, opening her heart about an impossible love where a black girl is in love with a white sailor has been omitted. The only action that the Swahili reader gets to read is the section where Mr Good cries because Foulata has just died.

The trend of translating erotic scenes has evolved from Brenn to Adam’s translations. Brenn could not allow himself to include anything that would be considered indecent. He translated at the onset of prose translation and had to be aware of the ‘grid of normativity’ at all times. Adam on the other hand is translating at a time of possible re-birth of translation. It has to be remembered that there has not been any significant translation into Swahili from the 1980s. Adam pushes the limits of acceptability to a certain extent, but even he does not translate all of the erotic scenes. As seen, there are scenes that he includes in his translation while aware of the levels of tolerance in the target culture and there are scenes that he only offers the gist, avoiding details.

4.7.2.3 The Supernatural

It has been previously noted that the Swahili have always been curious about the supernatural. We find that, ‘despite the dissemination of knowledge and education among adults...*uchawi* and *uganga* appear constantly in most novels, at times as a source of danger and as a means of relieving and explaining social and individual tensions, stresses and conflicts’. (Ohly, 1981:38) Writers are a reflection of society and the fact that they are still writing about witchcraft in this era of the globalisation shows the concept’s prominence. In the Swahili society, ills are explained away with phrases such as ‘*karogwa huyo!*’ – ‘he/she has been bewitched’, ‘*ana ruhani huyo*’ or

⁴⁵ <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2166/2166-h/2166-h.htm#chap01>

‘*ana mgeni wa kichwa*’, ‘he/she is possessed by the *Ruhani* spirit’ or worse, ‘*ana mashetani*’, ‘he/she is possessed by the demon’.

Among many circles, we find the *mganga* or *mchawi*, ‘witch doctor’, armed with a number of tools ranging from bones to potions which are all attached to certain beliefs. A good example of *mganga* is the historical Kinjeketile Ngwale who instigated the Maji maji resistance. He was known for his powers and ability to raise the spirits of the dead so that one could see their own ancestors. People believed that if they sprinkled themselves with his sacred water or carried it on their chest held by a string round their neck or drink it as medicine; they would be immune to German bullets. These would turn into water.

This resistance is seen by Tanzanians as the first major step, a justified rising, against foreign occupation. With the *Majimaji*, we see for the first time in Africa the coming together of many ethnic groups to fight a common enemy. In Namibia the Herero fought the Germans as a single tribe, in Guinea the Peuhl / Malinke fought the French, both of these were easily defeated. It was only in Southern Tanganyika where many tribes came together that it took two years for the Powerful Germans to defeat the less powerful. It needs to be understood that this society that resisted was predominantly animist, they practised ‘tambiko’ -gave sacrifices- to certain gods and spirits which were essentially the same. Hongo the water spirit that Kinjeketile consulted was similar to Kolelo, the water spirit of the luguru tribe.

In retrospect, one can argue that it is this common ancestral heritage which enabled these tribes to come together and fight. Similarly, modern Tanzanians find pride in the achievements of their ancestors because they can relate to what is now interpreted as ‘supernatural beliefs’. And most people still believe in this common heritage. It is very much a part of the Swahili socialization.

On the religious front, we find that some Christian circles in Tanzania, for example the 'Born Again', tend to chase away the *shetani*, 'devil', using exorcism uttering words such as '*kwa jina la Bwana...*', 'in the name of Jesus/God...'. Among the Islamic circles where African-Islam⁴⁶ is practised it is believed that the most certain way of getting rid of a bad *ruhani* is through reading the Quran or visiting an *ulamaa* so the latter may recite for one and offer an amulet for protection or *kombe* which are quranic verses written on paper and later dissolved to be drunk. Sometimes the *ulamaa*'s readings involve the presence of items such as ropes, eggs and rice; all playing different roles in the 'cleansing' process.

It is this latter practice that echoes the tale of 'the Envier and the Envied'. Burton's version has two neighbours where one envied the other. When the Envied got wind of his neighbour's endeavour to injure him, he left the city and founded a holy house, in time acquiring followers. He read litanies and lectured the Quran prompting many to come to him so he may pray for them. When the Envier heard this, he set out to rejoin him then cunningly contrived to throw him in a well located in the Envied yard. As it happened, some Jinns lived in the well, they caught him. Then sat down talking amongst each other about the Sultan visiting the Envied the next day on account of his daughter being possessed by a spirit; Maymun, son of Damdam. This Jinn is madly in love with the princess thus nothing would remove him from her except the fumigation of seven hairs from a spot on the Envied tom cats' tail. Everything happened as predicted by the Jinns, the pious Envied removed the Jinn from the princess. To thank him, the Sultan made him his son in law, soon after, the Wazir died and all the courtiers cried for the son in law to be made Wazir. At the death of the Sultan, he was made Sultan. Then, one day as he had mounted his horse admiring the eminence of his kingdom he saw his old neighbor. He asked for

⁴⁶ For more on African Islam see Lodhi and Westerlund (1997) www.islamfortoday.com/tanzania.htm.

the man to be brought to him and instead of punishing him, endowed him with treasures.

The idea of the envier and the envied is quite widespread among the Swahili as it is in many cultures. The source of the problem is the envier, *mtu mwenye kijicho*. *Kijicho* which means a 'hostile eye'- 'evil eye'- is the result of *husuda*, 'envy'. The Swahili of Islamic origin require that one says *mashallah* – Praise to God- at every opportunity that could cause envy. Thus even when one is praising one's child, it has to be uttered. Most personal ills and misfortunes are often put down to *kijicho*. In this context, the Swahili would unquestionably wholly relate to this tale.

Similarly, this concept of the well as a source of the supernatural is also prominent in a number of Swahili oral tales. It probably originates from the idea of *Mzimuni*, 'the underground home of the spirits'. We find for instance that prior to the Majimaji, the *mganga*, Kinjeketile Ngwale had to immerse himself in water, go underground so as to meet with *Honga*. There is also a novel written by Mohamed S. Abdulla titled *Kisima cha Giningi*, 'The Giningi well', which deals with the supernatural.

This tale is among the few where the narration between Brenn's and Adam's is very similar. Both translations go along the same lines. Brenn has gone out of his usual trend of abridging and has translated almost 'faithfully'. The main difference between the two translations is the language used. Adam's work leans towards religious beliefs and uses a coastal language whereas Brenn's uses mechanical standard Swahili. Thus the *walii* in Adam's translation says to the Sultan: '*Naam, Seyyid yangu*', '*Inshallah Seyyid yangu*' (Vol 1: 126). *Naam* is a positive response uttered mainly in the coastal areas, *Inshallah* is a typical Islamic term which means 'God willing' whereas *Seyyid yangu* means 'my Master'. On the other hand, Brenn

uses words such as '*ndiyo bwana*' (1973, Vol 1:49) which is standard Swahili for 'yes master'.

Similarly, Brenn advances that the Jinn who had possessed the princess was called '*Maimum mwana wa Dimdim*' (1973, Vol 1:48), 'Maimun son of Dimdim', whereas Adam calls him '*Maimun bin Dimdim*' (Vol 1:127) which also means Maimun son of Dimdim but is a typical coastal/Islamic terminology. Needless to say, Burton's linguistic choices align more with Adam than with Brenn since his intention was to portray the ways of living of the Arabs and Muslims.

The translation of this tale shows that, there were instances when Brenn does not 'short-circuit' and does full narrations. This it seems was largely determined by the theme of the tales. Thus when the given themes were more secular and portrayed moralistic values, he rendered them as faithful as he could, in principle. On the other hand, Adam endeavours to grasp all chances so as to place the tales in their socio-religious milieu.

4.7.2.4 Race and Identity

Needless to say, the question of race and identity as seen in *The Nights* is a question of the culture of the time as opposed to racism in the modern times. The world described in *The Nights* is full of slaves who are black as well as white although what is black carries with it negative connotations therefore, the black jinni is the most vicious, the wicked women who have illicit affairs do so with black slaves and so forth. It is a world where the children born to concubines or slaves with Masters or Kings were free men but if these happened to be black, some form of evil will inadvertently be revealed about them. This is especially the case in Burton's translation. The racial oriented attitude revealed by Burton is a reflection of the institutionalized racism that was part and parcel of the colonial empires such as the

British Empire under which he served for many years. In one of his footnotes, Burton mentions Zanzibar as an explanation for Mas'ud the slave's physique.

Debauched women prefer Negroes on account of the size of their parts. I measured one in Somali-land, who quiescent, numbered nearly six inches. This is a characteristic of the Negro race and of African animals...consequently the deed of kind takes a much longer time and adds greatly to the woman's enjoyment. In my time no honest Hindi Moslem would take his women folk to Zanzibar on account of the huge attractions and enormous temptations there and thereby offered to them (Burton, 1885:6).

Burton, who had been to Zanzibar, wrote about the Swahili and he describes them as 'mulattos, descended from Asiatic settlers and colonists, Arabs and Persians of the Days of Ignorance, who intermarried with the Wakafiri or infidels (Burton, 1872:408). It seems that Burton had a penchant for certain words that would portray the 'other', such as the African for instance as inferior, to say the least, nevertheless, 'Burton believed in, and feared, the exceptional virility of the black man' (Irwin 1994:34). Despite seeing himself as expert on a number of subjects, including sex, his descriptions should be understood as those by a man of his time.

Burton's translation includes a number of exaggerated descriptions and annotations which are simply anti-black and racist. Where Haddawy (1990), who translates Mahdi (1984), writes that a given slave was black or white, Burton adds a number of descriptive adjectives which are pejorative at best. For example, in the tale of 'the young king of the black islands', the prince discovers that his wife has a lover and Burton describes the lover as:

a hideous negro slave with his upper lip like the cover of a pot, and his lower like an open pot; lips which might sweep up sand from the gravel –floor of the cot. He was to boot a leper and paralytic, lying upon a strew of sugar-cane trash and wrapped in an old blanket and the foulest rags and tatters' (Vol 1:71).

On the other hand, Haddawy (1990: 57) describes this man as 'a decrepit black man sitting on reed shavings and dressed in tatters'. Another example that makes Burton's prejudices apparent is his description of Mas'ud, the slave who was king Shahriyar's

wife's lover. He is described as 'a big slobbering blackamoor with rolling eyes which showed the whites, a truly hideous sight' (Vol 1:6). Haddawy simply describes the latter as 'a black slave' (ibid, 5).

Burton seems to have had a fondness of describing black people in the 'foulest' of terms but this study will not add up to the criticisms that have been thrown at him for his cultural and racial prejudices. Irwin (1994:33) sums up the latter's writing when he advances that, 'Burton was a man of many prejudices, and they were vigorous ones. He was racist (in an age when racism was acquiring pseudo-scientific pretensions). 'Niggers', Jews and Persians got rough treatment in the notes'.

Despite using Burton's work as the source text, the Swahili as translated by Brenn does not include any of its racist descriptions. There is the omission of eunuchs as has been noted above and we find that, interestingly, there is a trend towards the portrayal of characters that are socially acceptable and representative of the ordinary person in the society. For instance, the Revised Edition, edited by Yahya and Said, uses images by K.K. Abdallah which depict oriental and African characters. These wear the traditionally Swahili cloth for women, *khanga*, and the men wear the *khanzu* with the cap, *balaghashia*. This move is a reflection of the nationalisation and appropriation that characterized the 1970s. Similarly, the images in the Revised Edition are also much more simplified compared to the illustrations in the 1929 edition signed by H. I. Ford which project oriental characters in their given environment. These are representatives of the times where we find that the colonial state saw the Swahili as an extension of the oriental. Interestingly, the scenes of spirits from the 1929 edition which were erased in the Revised Edition, appear in Adam's translation, as do all the characters depicted in their oriental dress and not Swahili dress. Thus the images in Adam's translation are largely re-cycled from the

1929 edition. Adam's re-cycling of these images is twofold. One may argue that his understanding of the Swahili society is not too different from that of the colonial period or it is possible that he simply does not believe that it is necessary to portray the characters as Swahili and fully domesticate them for a given translation to be integrated in a society. Adam's stance is built around a foreignizing strategy that accounts for the target text culture.

In regards to images, I made an interesting observation through looking at the images of *Elisi katika nchi ya Ajabu* (1967). For instance, we find that, although all the characters have been made Swahili, wearing long white robes and the Swahili hats, *tarabushi*, nevertheless, the very first page contains a picture of an African looking girl wearing a piece of cloth across her chest, looking at the Queen of hearts in her empirical court. She is dressed in a gown, the image of Queen Victoria, seated in her very English court with her courtiers and the King of hearts are all wearing wigs and looking like members of the British monarchy. One may interpret this as a typical orientalist image where the Queen can be no other but Queen Victoria look-alike. But, before jumping into such conclusions, it should be remembered that, the Queen of hearts and her entourage are all playing-cards. In Swahili, playing-cards, *karata*, are named after the front or face that each card carries together with all their markings. Therefore, the King of Hearts is *Mzungu wa nne wa kopa*. *Mzungu* means 'white man'. The fact that the monarchy in the translation is made up of white people as opposed to all the other characters in the novel, may simply be because the translator wanted to represent the exact images from the different playing-cards that the Swahili were familiar with. Interestingly, these images make evil characters such as the Queen of hearts, well and truly, worlds apart from the little African Elisi.

As for racism, we find that, for instance, Brenn's frame story in *Elfu lela ulela* is devoid of any description of adultery which means that it is also devoid of race

since these two appeared together. Thus Mas'ud and the other slaves, black and white do not feature in the Swahili translation – they have been omitted. The other tale that has racial overtones is the story of 'The young king of the black islands' which has been modified in the Swahili translation.

In the 1929 edition, Brenn writes that the King hears two slave girls tell each other that the queen does not love their king anymore and that she wants to kill him because she is a witch. The King decides to see the truth in this and thenceforth kills one of the queen's beloved servant who was fond of revolting. The slave is described as a servant, '*mtumishi*' (1973, Vol 1: 21). Therefore, the reason for the King to have killed this servant is simply because the latter enjoyed to revolt and was one of the Queens' favourite servants. He was testing the queen. There is no implication of the Queen and her servant having been lovers, which they were as seen in Burton's, Haddawy and Adam's translations.

Another tale that carries this theme is 'The tale of the Barber's fifth brother' which differs in Brenn's 1929 edition and the Revised Edition. A black slave in the tale is described by Haddawy (1990) as: a 'great black slave' whereas Burton describes him as: 'a black slave big of body and bulk...ill-omened nigger'. On the other hand, the 1929 edition renders this character as *twana moja jeusi mno*' (1929, Vol 2: 193) – 'big, extremely black slave'. But the Revised Edition translates this as: '*baba moja kubwa mno*' which means 'an extremely big man'. *Baba* is also the term used to refer to one's father.

In this instance, it seems that the editors of the Revised Edition were much more sensitive to the portrayal of this black man. Once again, this is a reflection of the times when they were revising the work since the 1970's were a period when feelings of nationalism and 'black and proud' were quite widespread. We find that for instance in Zanzibar, the late president Karume who was later assassinated by a

young man of Arab ancestry, had gone as far as ordering all girls of Arab origin to be married off to pure African men. He advocated an '*Ugozi*' ideology which roughly translates as 'the ideology of the hard black skin'. This means that the black skin is hard, it has survived slavery and the winds of time and can erase all traces of Arabness among the Swahili. Karume wanted to give the next generation of children a purer African paternity since in Zanzibar, one is 'Arab' if one's father is of Arab ancestry. Although many people of mixed origin ran off to live in Dubai and other parts of the Arab world, there were still many forced marriages.

The treatment of the black man in the Revised Edition is therefore sensitive to this historical fact. It humanizes the black slave. Having said this, it should be noted that there are some instances when Brenn does not include the colour of the characters and simply refers to them either by their names or as men and women. He simply omits their racial identity. Since the 1929 Swahili translations were almost devoid of racism, I decided to look at the translation of Haggard's *King Solomon Mines* (1885), which has been translated into Swahili by Frederick Johnson and Brenn. Rider Haggard had worked for the British imperial colonial government in South Africa and used that setting for his tale of the adventures of an English explorer, Alan Quarterman, among mythical lost tribes.

The novel's main theme can be interpreted as the expansion of British colonization and domination in foreign territories. It also includes aspects of spirituality, the supernatural, virility and ofcourse racism. We therefore find different racist terms strewn in the book and these include 'savages', 'natives', 'boys', and 'Kaffirs'. Interestingly, these stereotypical racial terms were not translated into Swahili. Therefore we find that Johnson and Brenn translate 'boys' as 'people' who accompany the explorers, '*watu watakaofuatana nasi*' (1929:21). And sometimes, the situations where racial terms are used are omitted. Often these situations do not

carry any meaningful purpose other than to show the superiority of the main explorer – a white man. We find for instance that Johnson and Brenn omitted the following conversation between Alan Quarterman and his ‘boy’: ‘Baas,’ said he. I took no notice. ‘Baas,’ said he again. ‘Eh, boy, what is it?’ I asked. ‘Baas, we are going after diamonds’.⁴⁷ Similarly, the term ‘kafir’ is simply translated as ‘someone’ or the person being referred to is mentioned by name. For instance, in the following sentence ‘kafir’ is replaced by ‘someone’: ‘Khiva informed me that a Kafir was waiting to see me’⁴⁸ is translated as ‘*Khiva aliniambia kuwa yuko mtu mmoja anataka kuonana nami*’ (1929:22).

It seems that, in both translations, Johnson and Brenn were aware of imperialistic overtones and tried to downplay them by choosing terms that were linguistically and culturally appropriate for the target readership. They therefore neutralized the cultural, historical and political power relations inherent to the source texts by negotiating more acceptable equivalent terms. Their translations include terms such as *Bwana*, ‘Master / Baas’ and *Mtumwa*, ‘Slave’, which are terms loaded with historical significance to the Swahili. This shows that as translators they were aware of their target audience and the Swahili milieu and did not try to revolutionize their translations. I would go as far as say that, although the polysystem theory would develop four decades after the production of their work, they nevertheless often employed functionalist and culturally-oriented descriptive translation theories.

Another example that touches on race and identity is the translation of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) into *Elisi katika nchi ya Ajabu* (1940) which was translated by Ermyntude Virginia St Lo Malet Conan-Davies. For many years, it was believed that the translator was Ermyntude’s brother, Edward. This is because she never signed her full name and simply used the initial E. Her brother, Sir Edward

⁴⁷ <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2166/2166-h/2166-h.htm#chap01>.

⁴⁸ <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2166/2166-h/2166-h.htm#chap01>.

St Lo Malet was a renowned administrator of the British Empire while she was a nurse and had married Conan-Davies, an assistant District Commissioner. We therefore find a number of critics referring to her as though she were a 'he'. Her translation portrays a socio-political and cultural environment that is completely Swahilized. The book cover contains an image of a little African girl with short kinky hair that is braided, a piece of cloth is tied on her chest, she is barefoot and stands gazing at an immense tree. The book opens with a poem addressed to African children which informs them that a long time ago, a certain 'mzungu', white man, who loved children had narrated a tale based on sweet dreams. She advances: 'ninapenda watoto waafrika pia...' I too love African children, therefore she wishes to tell them the story of Alice in Wonderland.⁴⁹

The novel, which has been commented upon by Harries (1970) is completely 'Africanized'. For instance, when Alice is in the pool of her tears she talks to a mouse and says:

So she began, O mouse do you know the way out of this pool?... (Alice thought this must be the way of speaking to a mouse... she remembered having seen in her brother's Latin Grammar, 'A mouse – of a mouse – a mouse – O mouse') ... Perhaps it doesn't understand English, thought Alice. I daresay it is a French mouse, come over with William the Conqueror ... So she began again, *Ou est ma chatte?* Which was the first sentence in her French lesson-book. The mouse gave a sudden leap out of the water, and seemed to quiver all over with fright (Carroll, Lewis, 2005:10).

The Swahili version reads:

Alisema ewe panya, nchi kavu iko wapi? Elisi akasema moyoni, Labda hasikii Kiswahili, nitasema Kiingereza. Hakujua ila maneno machache ya Kiingereza, akasema kwa sauti kuu, Where is my cat? (Maneno haya ndiyo ya kwanza katika kitabu chake cha kujifunza Kiingereza, tafsiri yake, 'yuko wapi paka wangu?') aliposikia maneno haya panya akaruka akatoka katika maji akitetemeka kwa hofu (1967:24).

Before embarking on a discussion of the above text, let us consider the gloss of the Swahili translation:

⁴⁹ The entire book is available on the rare books collection at: <http://www.rarebookroom.org/Control/caralk/index.html>.

She said, O mouse, where is the dry land? Alice thought to herself (she said in her heart), Maybe he doesn't hear/understand Swahili, I will speak in English. She knew but a few English words, she spoke aloud, Where is my cat? (These were the first words in her English grammar book, its translation, 'where is my cat?') Hearing these words, the mouse leapt out of water trembling with fear.

Harries (1970) criticizes the obvious departure from the original. English and French are rendered as Swahili and English. In the Swahili, Latin and Alice's brother are not referred to, nor is William the conqueror. Harries (1970:30) finds that, 'the translator has done more than a translator has a right to do. His desire to appeal to his African audience has taken him much too far. By presenting Alice as an African girl he makes it impossible for him to remain objective and consequently faithful to his text'.

Ermyntrude St Lo Malet used the domesticating strategy as advocated by Venuti (1995, 2000), also referred to by Lefevere (2000) as naturalisation. She adapted the work in her quest to present her character and her surroundings in an environment that her young receptor audience would find familiar. This is the reason why she changed the young English girl from Oxford into a Swahili speaking girl, most probably from Dar es Salaam which is where she herself spent a few years. Similarly, since animals such as the dormouse are not very common in East Africa, she has replaced the dormouse in the tale into a bushbaby, *komba*, an animal that is comical due to its love of the palm wine sap which it drinks from the palm itself before collapsing into sleep. According to Harries (1970), choosing this strategy shows that the translator has underestimated 'the intelligence of his audience' (ibid).

That is a point for debate. I would like to point out that it is imperative that we question the type of equivalence intended by the translator versus the one that most critics seem to relate to. Usually critics, Harries included, understand that equivalence is the crux of translation and the majority of Swahili critics have equated it to faithfulness to the source text. The discussion by Venuti (2000) can bring this into

context, especially when he extrapolates that equivalence has meant accuracy, adequacy, correctness, correspondence, fidelity and identity.

The type of equivalence sought by St Lo Malet can be linked to identity. She wanted the African child to relate with the characters that she was translating. This is the reason, for instance, why she translates the fact that Alice was sitting by the banks of a pond considering if she should pick up daisies to make a chain as '*amekaa chini ya mwembe* (1967:11), 'she sat under a mango tree'. Most of the students⁵⁰ that I interviewed found St Lo Malet's equivalence humorous before reiterating Harries' argument. But Prof. Issa Shivji⁵¹ pointed out to me that, he doubted that St Lo Malet thought that Swahili children were not familiar with ponds. Rather, Swahili children did not appreciate the pond in the same way as they did the shade of a big tree. It needs to be remembered that due to the tropical climate, children in East Africa, as in many parts of Africa, have tended to play under big trees. These are often located at the center of the village and offer a fantastic cool shade. Thus, for the translator, it was an issue of transferring the work into a recognisable, familiar context as opposed to any form of patronising on his part. The banks of a pond would probably have direct sunlight and crocodiles, thus would not have the same appeal as would a big tree. Thus, De Malet was simply attaining her interpretation of cultural equivalence. It is this cultural equivalence that has made her exchange the white rabbit's waist coat for a *kanzu* (usually a white robe worn by Swahili men along the coast) and to boost, he has a walking stick which is also typically Swahili. Therefore, the rabbit who 'took a watch out of its waistcoat pocket' (2005:18), became one who '*...ana kanzu na mfuko na saa*' (1967:8), '...had a robe, a bag and a watch'.

On the other hand, in his translation of *The Nights*, Adam renders the racial oriented words quite explicitly. But, although Burton's translation is one of Adam's

⁵⁰ Interviewed at Zanaki High School, Dar es Salaam, 6th November 2006.

⁵¹ Interviewed at his home, Dar es Salaam, 1st November 2006.

source texts, Adam does not undertake a word for word literal translation. He compares Burton's version with that of Weil (1865), then conveys the general trend of the content. He does not include any of Burton's 'anthropological' footnotes. For instance, in 'the tale of the Barber's Fifth Brother', Adam writes that Al Nacha is confronted by '*pande la jitu jeusi*', 'bulky black man'. He also describes the lover from 'the tale of the young king of black islands' as '*mtumwa mmoja mtu mzima, mweusi kama lami aliyevaa nguo chafu kuukuu*', 'an adult slave, as black as tar, wearing old and dirty clothes'. This latter description is meant to be derogative. The Swahili describe a person as being as black as ebony, as coal, pot or tar derogatively. This may have stemmed from the fact that historically, the people who were 'purely black' came from the interior of the continent as slaves whereas those who inhabited the coast – the Swahili- were largely of mixed origin and therefore had brown or sometimes cream complexions. Those who were lighter saw themselves as superior to their brethren who were much darker. Adam uses these terms on purpose in order to show the reality of the world that was portrayed by *The Nights*, a world whose sharp claws were often made blunt by Brenn and Johnson.

Nevertheless, there are instances when Adam is neutral on the issue of the colour of the slaves. For example, Shahzaman finds his wife in the arms of '*mtumwa wake mmoja*' (pg 20), 'one of his slaves'. The same applies when giving the description of the slaves who accompanied the queen. Adam does not acknowledge the fact that 'ten were white slaves... blackamoor' (Burton, Vol 1: 6), he translates this as, '*wajakazi ishirini...na watumwa ishirini*' (Adam, Vol 1: 3), 'twenty slave girls...and twenty slaves'. There is no reference to colour.

It seems therefore that both the translators of the 1929 edition and the editors of the revised Swahili edition were conscious of colour sensitivities. The racist and often hideous terms used by Burton do not come across into the Swahili. The

translation tends to be devoid of negative racial descriptions as much as possible. It can also be argued that for Brenn, a black man, rescued slave, brought up by the church, living in the colonial times these translations must have been bitter sweet. Bitter due to the fact that he was confronted by the imperialistic ideologies that he most probably encountered often enough as an employee of the empire and sweet because he could counteract them, ignore them and present politically correct translations to the masses – his people. As for Johnson, I would hypothesize that following his quest of enriching the Swahili literary polysystem, he must have chosen a strategy that would be beneficial for his mission of expanding reading materials in Swahili which would be accepted as Swahili works; in this respect, he succeeded a great deal.

On the other hand, as a product of what can be called the post-colonial period and also the globalized world, Adam refused to shy away from portraying racism. He has spent his adult life in Europe and has travelled widely, seeing the world for what it is. Thence, he has not hesitated to show the apparent racism in *The Nights*, an experience that he must have lived and about which he wants the Swahili to be aware.

4.8 Analysis

At this point some generalizations can be proposed regarding the translation norms that were in operation in the colonial period as well as Adam's stance on these norms. The colonial period ensured that European norms dominated literary production and thus the empire chose the texts that were to be translated and how they were to be translated. It can therefore be argued that, during the colonial period, the preliminary norms in regards to translation policy were determined by the colonial administration. Their language and education policies which have been discussed at length in previous chapters played a vital role in this respect. Translation texts were selected

largely following their pre-determined role in the educational system. Translations were undertaken to fill a void and the selection criteria was dependent on the status of the given originals in the English polysystem. We find therefore that English classical works formed the majority of what was translated.

Similarly, the colonial period saw translation occupying a central position in the literary polysystem. There was hardly any local literature as such which means that translation played the vital role of shaping what was to become the future of Swahili literature. ‘With the exception of the Swahili chronicles, the occasional memoir or autobiography, a great deal of prose produced in Swahili...- especially in areas falling under colonial influence – were translations’ (Rollins, 1983:61). Translated literature occupied a primary position and played an active part in shaping the centre of the Swahili polysystem.⁵² And in the same breath, these very same translations were to set the scene for both adequacy and acceptability in future Swahili translations making domestication the desirable strategy.

The Empire also decided what was to be published and it is interesting to note that most of what was translated and published had to do with adventure. Rollins (1993) remarks that it is odd that out of the 39 prose works listed by Spaandnonck in his *Practical and Systematical Swahili Bibliography at the beginning of the 20th century*, 30 were written by Europeans. Johnson, who edited the 1929 edition of *The Nights* and translated *King Solomon Mines* (1885) and his colleague Hellier, have 19 under their names. Thus, during the colonial period, ‘not only were the early collections of Swahili prose collected by Europeans but also a large portion of the prose was actually written by Europeans’ (ibid, 62).

The main idea was that they were translating for the Swahili, a people that had enjoyed maritime contact with the outside world for centuries, thus it would have

⁵² See Chapter 2 and Even-Zohar, 1978:193.

seemed normal to produce adventures. One can argue that the Swahili translated literature during this time does follow a certain trend in their portrayal of the ‘uncivilized’. Examples can be extracted from *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Mowgli stories*, *Gulliver’s Travels* and *King Solomon Mines*; Consider Friday, the cannibals, the Lilliputians - all characters ‘discovered’ by the civilized world and in the case of Mowgli, he is himself uncivilized. Wisker (2007) reiterates the above by advancing that *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) amongst other works does overtly engage with certain phases in the British colonialism. It has been seen by critics ‘as archetypes of the colonizer and colonized...Crusoe is positioned, then, as heroic and enlightened and, as Friday’s rescuer, Crusoe is always his master on the island, which he has measured, planted and tries to control’ (Wisker, 2007:90).

It is uncertain whether the Swahili were supposed to empathize with characters such as Friday. One can go further and argue that the Swahili were probably expected to locate their stereotyped reflection in the uncivilized protagonists. It is hard to ascertain whether the Swahili had an inkling of this in the heavily domesticated and abridged translations, produced for their consumption. The Swahili saw themselves as ‘*wastaarabu*’ – civilized people. This concept originates from the word *Arabu* which means Arab and it is a claim that is tightly bound to prestige as well as religious and economic purposes. Thus, they would have enjoyed reading about the exploring and discovering, which actually gave insight into the foreigner’s lust for wealth and accumulation. But since the Swahili distanced themselves from the concept of *ushenzi*, ‘savagery, barbarism’ and rather sought to identify themselves with *uungwana*, it is doubtful whether the stereotype had any impact.⁵³

⁵³ For more on this see Trimingham (1962) where he discusses Islam in East Africa.

Parallel to this, one might hypothesize that this was an attempt on the part of the colonial state to encourage a literature that diverted the attention of the colonized from politics to adventure. The colonial state could have argued that they were following the norm as the Swahili were already acquainted with oral tales of adventures from the orient. But the difference is that *The Nights*, for instance, was introduced through cultural links and trade whereas the translations were somehow imposed as they were commissioned for the consumption of the Swahili, specifically for the impressionable young. As has already been discussed, the influence of this trend is obvious when reading the tales written by authors such as Shaaban Robert, who had a number of awards, as he presented tales where the main themes were adventure and morality.

The translation of *The Nights* has had various interpretations by different cultures through time since 'the strategies employed by translators reflect the context in which texts are produced' (Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999:6). The strategy used in the 19th century translation of the English version by Burton (1885) and Lane (1838-1840) amongst others who employed extensive anthropological footnotes shows the position of translation from the 'other' at that time. 'Texts from Arabic or Indian languages were cut, edited and published with anthropological footnotes. In this way the subordinate position of the individual text and culture that had led to its production in the first place was established through specific textual practices' (ibid). This is reflected in Burton's racist footnote about the pleasures found in Zanzibar and Lane's (1838-1840) explanation about the Arabs being much more gullible and believed the fictitious characters in the tales. In this light, although none of the Swahili versions contained footnotes, nevertheless, the first two editions were cut, abridged and edited out. Therefore, perceived from a post-colonial perspective, one

can interpret this as a reflection of a context where the level of understanding on the part of the Swahili was questioned.⁵⁴

In the same breath, it should also be noted that, the restructuring that took place is also a form of rewriting that manipulates the text. Lefevere (1992), advances that rewriting is the adaptation of a work of literature to a different audience with the intention of influencing the way in which that audience reads the work. He sees translation as an act carried out under the influence of particular factors such as power and patronage, ideology and poetics together with norms which are linked to systems in a society. He argues that people in positions of power are the ones who rewrite literature and govern its consumption. Similarly, Lefevere points out that refractions, which include abridgements and footnotes, do sometimes conform to the ‘...concept of what ‘good’ literature should be’ (Lefevere 2000:235). There is therefore a possibility that Brenn and Johnson, as did most of the translators at the time, were simply translating according to the norm that they had set. And, armed with the benefit of hind sight, we are now aware that the Swahili translations undertaken during the colonial period were directed at a particular audience, the young, and they were also highly influenced by issues of language, culture and social norms. All these factors have ofcourse played important roles towards the products of translation in the colonial period. To quote Lefevere (1992), these translators were induced by either ideology where they comformed to the dominant ideology or the dominant poetics respectively.

The central position of translated literature can be linked to many reasons, one of these being the existence of a literary vacuum. There was no Swahili prose literature prior to the translations and the poetry that existed was insufficient and could not satisfy the public expectations. This may have been a deciding factor for the

⁵⁴ Although this can also be interpreted as a form of re-writing that manipulates the text. This has been discussed by Lefevere (1993). Also See chapter two of this study.

mushrooming of one of the most prominent norms in the translation of *Alfu lela ulela* and a large number of Swahili texts at that time; the norm of situational equivalence. This is the ‘insertion of a more familiar context than the one used in the original’ (ibid). This has been the translation strategy that led to a work acquiring acceptability as opposed to adequacy. Acceptable works conform to the accepted norms and in the case of Swahili, these norms have tended to be ‘what is familiar’. Thus translators have tended to familiarize the environment, language used and the cultural values so that they conform to what is considered Swahili.

For instance, Aidarus added a number of verses at the beginning and the end of the *Hamziyya* for the purpose of making his mark on the work. This strategy not only positions the work in the Swahili milieu, making it accessible to his target audience.⁵⁵ But I would argue that it is the prevalence of such strategies that has led scholars such as Mazrui⁵⁶ to discuss the absorption of translated texts into the body of Swahili literature and, in turn, be the definition of the given body. In this light we find that the images of the Revised Edition were rendered Swahili, African, with characters wearing the *khangas* for instance. Similarly, a sexual encounter is referred to by Brenn as *kuzungumza naye kwa kitambo*, (conversing for a long time). We also find that Adam who, to a large extent has not tended to shy away from eroticism, refutes its extensive presentation and uses words that for instance refer back to previous sexual encounters: ‘they did the same’.

In the final analysis it seems that the Swahili have been highly influenced by the foreign. This influence has ranged between the Oriental and the West. We find that the Swahili embraced the first, second and the current translations of *Alfu lela Ulela* respectively. Through usage of a coastal dialect that is archaic Adam achieves the difficult task of placing the tales within a time and space in which the Swahili can

⁵⁵ See Wa Mutiso (2005).

⁵⁶ See Mazrui (2007).

not only relate to but also find familiarity with. He is reclaiming the past. Through the employment of these archaisms, the reader feels that they are reading a work written many years ago; this is one of the main reasons that made this canonical work achieve complete acceptability. Thus, although the translation occupied the centre of the polysystem since its inception when Brenn translated it, it seems that Adam's re-translation has completed its absorption into the Swahili polysystem.

5. CHAPTER FIVE

The Translation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*

5.1 Background Information

William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* has been classified as a comedy although it also contains some aspects of Shakespeare's romantic plays. It has also been branded as a problem play. In the "Introduction" to the edition used for this study, Edward Dowden (1966:586) classifies it as a play where 'the possible period of composition' can be limited 'to the interval between 1596 and 1598'. In the making of this play, Shakespeare brought together two ancient folk tales, the first one involving the villain, a vengeful, greedy creditor trying to extract a pound of flesh as per an agreed bond, and the other involving a marriage suitor's choice among three chests in order to win a lover. 'Literary curiosity has traced the bond story and again the caskets story through the literature not only of the West but of the East' (ibid, 588). These two themes also appear in what is believed to be Shakespeare's direct source, a play titled *The Jew* believed to have been compiled by a certain Giovanni Fiorentino. According to Edward Dowden in the Introduction to *The Merchant of Venice* (1967), *The Jew* portrays greediness of worldly choosers, who are the suitors and usurers; the prototype of Shylock, the Jew in *The Merchant of Venice*. *The Jew* is itself 'largely indebted to the tale of *Il Pecorone*' (ibid), published in 1558, a tale that is very similar to Shakespeare's.

Shakespeare's, *The Merchant of Venice* (1967) is the first of Shakespeare's comedies where character is a central theme. Antonio, the merchant in question is only a tool used by Shakespeare to bring together the two contending characters, Shylock, the villain, a Jewish moneylender, and Portia, Lady of Belmont, beautiful and charitable. Shylock seeks a literal pound of flesh from his Christian opposite, the

generous, faithful Antonio, the latter having accepted the flesh to act as his bond for a loan. In *Il Pecorone* a certain Ansaldo borrows ten thousand from a Jew and as bond, accepts a pound of flesh be cut from his body. Shakespeare's version of the chest-choosing tale involves the play's Christian heroine Portia, having suitors choose the correct chest, she steers her lover Bassanio towards the correct casket. Later on, she successfully defends his best friend Antonio from Shylock's legal suit. Similarly, according to Dowden (1966), the lady in *Il Pecorone* is an avaricious siren; her lovers have to stay awake to prove themselves. She gives them drowsy syrup so that they fall asleep and having failed their task, their worldly possessions become hers. Giannetto does the test and wins the lady. Also, 'the playful episode of the ring which brings Shakespeare's comedy to a delightful close is also found here' (ibid, 587).

5.2 William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare is one of the most widely read authors in the world. During the Romantic period he was acclaimed as a genius, and during the Victorian era he was worshipped as a hero. Numerous studies have been conducted about him and new interpretations are being undertaken almost on a daily basis. His work has been adopted and rediscovered by new scholarly movements in such a way that for instance, there are post-colonial interpretations of Shakespeare. Thence, I believe that it will suffice if only a summary is written about him. According to Terry (1998), Shakespeare was an English writer, a poet and a playwright regarded as the greatest writer in English. Some scholars refer to him as 'the Bard'. He wrote 38 plays, 154 sonnets and two lengthy narrative poems as well as other poems. He has been widely translated all over the world and his plays have been performed from generation to generation.

Shakespeare¹ was born in Stratford upon Avon in 1564. His mother, Mary Arden, was a farmer's daughter and his father, John Shakespeare, was initially a farmer but changed profession to become a glove-maker. In 1582, he married Anne Hathaway and had three children, a daughter Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith. Unfortunately, Hamnet died when he was just eleven years-old.

Between 1585 and 1592 he started a successful career in London as an actor, writer and part owner of the Lord Chamberlain's Men which was later known as Kings man. Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive, and there has been considerable speculation about such matters as his sexuality. Critics have implied that he might have had homosexual love² while others speculated that works attributed to him were probably written by others.³

Shakespeare's works such as *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* are considered the finest examples in English literature. Later in his life, Shakespeare concentrated on tragic comedies, collaborating with other playwrights. He died on the 23rd April 1616 and it is only seven years after his death that two of his former theatrical colleagues published the First Folio, a collected edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognized as Shakespeare's. It is ironic that although respected during his lifetime, his reputation did not rise to its present heights until the nineteenth century.

5.3 The Play's Synopsis

The play opens with Antonio, a merchant, lamenting that he feels sad but does not know the reason. His friends, Solanio and Salerio and later on Lorenzo and Gratiano try to cheer him up. Bassanio informs Antonio that he intends to woo a beautiful and

¹ This biographical information has been deducted from the Shakespeare Resource centre (<http://www.bardweb.net/index.html>).

² For more see: www.enotes.com/william-shakespeare.

³ For more see: www.shakespeare-online.com/faq/lifefaq.html.

wealthy heiress and ask her hand in marriage, but does not have the means. Antonio offers him 3,000 ducats in his quest. But since his ships and merchandise are at sea, he does not have the given ducats at hand. Henceforth, Bassanio begs a Jewish merchant Shylock to lend him 3000 ducats for which Antonio puts his property as the bond. Unfortunately, there exists great animosity between Antonio and Shylock and, only the previous week, Antonio had insulted and spat on Shylock for being a Jew. Shylock proposes a condition upon the agreement stipulating that should Antonio default on the loan, a pound of his flesh closest to his heart would be taken by Shylock. Bassanio refuses to allow Antonio to accept the risky condition. But Antonio who is surprised by what he interprets as the moneylender's generosity as the latter did not ask for interest, accepts. He is confident that his vessels at sea will come to port a month before the given three months' deadline.

Portia, the lady in question, resides at Belmont and in accordance to her late father's will, suitors asking for her hand in marriage are asked to choose the correct of three chests (gold, silver, and lead) and if they choose the right chest, they would qualify to marry her. Each chest has an inscription and only the correct one contains Portia's picture. One of the suitors hoping for Portia's hand, the Moroccan Prince, arrives at Belmont where he is informed that, should he choose the wrong chest, he must swear never to ask any woman's hand in marriage. The suitor who would look past the outward appearance of the caskets will find a portrait of Portia's within and thenceforth win her hand in marriage. The Moroccan Prince chooses one of the wrong chests, the gold chest, and leaves defeated. Similarly the second suitor, the Prince of Aragon, chooses the silver chest, also the wrong one. Again, he must swear to never woo any maid in marriage and never to tell a soul which chest he opened.

In Venice, Shylock's daughter Jessica, gives a love letter to Launcelot to deliver to Lorenzo; she intends to elope with him and convert to Christianity.

Ironically, before leaving for a dinner prepared for him and Bassanio by Launcelot, a servant who intends to desert him for his dinner companion, Shylock leaves his house keys with Jessica, warning her not to take part in that evening's Christian activities. Later that same night Gratiano, Salerio and Lorenzo meet outside Shylock's house to get Jessica. Jessica elopes with the Christian Lorenzo, taking a substantial amount of Shylock's wealth with her. All of them then head to meet Bassanio on Antonio's ship due to sail to Belmont.

Soon enough Shylock realizes that both his daughter and his money are missing; he wants them back. There is also bad news in regard to Antonio's ships, apparently they have sunk and this is confirmed by Solanio and Salerio. They however, make fun of Shylock for his predicament at losing his daughter. Shylock laments his monetary loss to another Jew, Tubal, yet rejoices that Antonio is sure to default on his loan. At Belmont, Portia begs Bassanio to wait before making a choice on the caskets. She wants to spend time with him so he may know her and choose the right casket. Bassanio refuses her offer and luckily chooses the correct lead casket. To seal the union, Portia gives Bassanio a ring, warning that he should never lose it nor give it away because it would mean losing her love for him. The respective servants, Gratiano and Nerissa, also announce their intention to wed. Next, Salerio, Lorenzo and Jessica arrive at Belmont, informing Bassanio that Antonio has lost his ships, and furthermore, that Shylock is viciously declaring forfeiture of the bond by Antonio. Bassanio leaves for Venice to repay the loan. Unknown to him, Portia follows suit, leaving Lorenzo and Jessica to manage her house. She pretends to be going off to a monastery to await Bassanio's return.

In Venice, with the bond at hand, Shylock has Antonio arrested and brought before court for failure to repay the loan. The Duke of Venice presides over the hearing of Antonio. Shylock makes it obvious that he intends to cut 'a pound of flesh

from Antonio's breast' since the due date for repayment has passed and that was the terms of the bond. Bassanio offers him 6,000 ducats for repayment but Shylock refuses and insists on the flesh. Nerissa and Portia, disguised as men, a court clerk and a doctor of civil law respectively, arrive at the court. Portia asks Shylock to show mercy but the latter refuses at which point she declares that the agreement be met, Shylock should cut a pound of flesh from Antonio. Portia then informs Shylock that the deed calls for flesh but no blood to be shed and exactly one pound to be taken. Shylock realizes that this is impossible and requests 9,000 ducats. Portia then reveals that Shylock is himself guilty of a crime; namely, conspiring to kill Antonio, a Venetian citizen. As punishment, the Duke and Antonio decide that Shylock must give half of his belongings to the court, keep the other half to himself and promise to give all his remaining belongings to his daughter and son-in-law (Lorenzo) upon his death. Also, he needs to become a Christian. With no other choice, Shylock agrees.

When Portia (dressed as the doctor of civil law) leaves, Bassanio offers her a monetary gift. Portia turns this down and requests for Bassanio's gloves and wedding ring instead. Bassanio hesitates on the ring but prodded by Antonio, he reluctantly gives it away. Nerissa (disguised as a court clerk), also gets her husband (Gratiano) to give her his wedding ring. The next morning, Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano and Nerissa reunite and after quarrelling over the loss of rings the women admit their ruse and return the rings to their husbands. Further more, they inform Antonio that three of his ships have come to port full of merchandise. Finally, they hand over the deed that promises Jessica and Lorenzo Shylock's money and possessions upon his death.

5.4 Background Information to the Swahili Translation

According to Mazrui (2007), the first Swahili exposure to Shakespeare was in the book *Hadithi Ingereza* (English Tales) which was published in 1900 by the University Mission to Central Africa in Zanzibar. The tales were in prose and were actually adaptations rather than translations. The tales which were translated include *The Taming of the Shrew* which was translated as *Mwanamke Aliyefugwa* (the kept woman), *The Tragedy of King Lear* translated as *Baba na Binti* (Father and daughter), *the Life of Timon of Athens* translated as *Kula Maji*, (eating water) and *The Merchant of Venice* translated as *Kuwia na Kuwiwa* which is an archaic Swahili phrase that means ‘Pardon’. Bishop Steere is also said to have translated some Shakesperean tales in 1867. Unfortunately these are no longer in circulation. Nevertheless, according to Mazrui, (2007:133) ‘what is particularly striking about this collection of translated texts is the extent to which it tried to be sensitive to the Swahili cultural universe’.

That kind of approach is not alien. It echoes the translation of *Elisi katika nchi ya ajabu* (1940) which has been discussed in the previous chapter. In retrospect domestication seems to have been the norm for colonial translators. It is not until Julius Kambarage Nyerere’s translation that we glimpse Shakespeare translated in what can be interpreted as ‘faithfulness’ – to an extent or ‘in principle’. Nyerere translated *The Merchant of Venice* as *Mabepari wa Venisi* in 1969. So as to understand this translation it is imperative that we understand the translator, his motivation, nationalistic tendencies that surrounded the translation and its given environment.

5.5 Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the Swahili Translator

Anthony Pym (2000, 2004) has been quite vocal in advocating the importance of studying what he calls a ‘sociology of translators’. As seen in the previous chapter, he has argued that ‘there seems little reason why translation history should deploy intricate textual criticism when it could attain many of its goals more directly by asking biographical and sociological questions. That is, by seeking its points of departure in translators rather than in translations’ (Pym, 2000). He points out that there is virtually no focus on translators in some of the greatest translation works, for instance in Nida’s prescriptive sociolinguistic approach and also ‘contextualized translators are similarly rare in most of the classical references of Descriptive Translation Studies’ (Pym, 2004).

Nevertheless, he does point out that the ‘sociological concept of norms, understood as regularities of behaviour (and hence of human actions, rather than just linguistic structures)’ (ibid), is interested in translators as they shape their products and as they get shaped into becoming producers. This means that, since our main interest is norms of Swahili translations, we will therefore counter the reproach made to Descriptive Translation Studies and be able to offer a ‘sociology of translators’.

Unfortunately, as seen in the previous chapter, the biographical information on Brenn and Johnson could not be said to be much. This cannot be said of Julius Nyerere whose life was an open book. He was a true man of the people and the only reproach one may have is that, there is too much biographical information about him. Julius Kambarage Nyerere⁴ was born on the 13th of April 1922 in the current Tanzania. His father was Chief Nyerere Burito of the Zanaki tribe from Musoma in the northern part of the country. He was the first President of Tanzania from 1962 when the country became a Republic until his retirement in 1985. He was often

⁴ Biographical information on Nyerere has been deducted from the Encyclopedia Britannica’s guide to black history (<http://www.britannica.com/blackhistory/article-9056571>).

referred to as *Mwalimu*⁵ or ‘teacher’ because of his profession prior to embarking on an active role in politics. The intention was to refer to him as the intellectual philosopher. He was also called *Baba wa Taifa*, ‘father of the nation’.

Nyerere started his formal education late at 12 years of age. He often recounted that he had walked from Butiama village to Musoma to begin studying at the Government Primary School. For his secondary education, Nyerere attended Tabora Boys School. During this period, there were very few government schools that accommodated both Muslim and Christian students. There were many Missionary schools. Tabora school was built mostly for children of tribal chiefs, while other government schools including Old Moshi and Tanga catered for other children. Thus, as the son of a tribal chief, Nyerere had the opportunity to attend the special school with other children of local chiefs.⁶ The intention was to create a local elite which was going to inherit the post-colonial state. It needs to be remembered that Tanganyika was a mandated territory of the United Nations after the defeat of the Germans in 1918. So Nyerere was the product of this elitist school. After his secondary education, he proceeded to Makerere University which was then the only tertiary education institution in East Africa. He returned to the then Tanganyika with a teaching Diploma and worked for 3 years at St. Mary’s Secondary School in Tabora, where he taught Biology and English. In 1949 he received a scholarship to attend the University of Edinburgh. Nyerere was the first Tanzanian to study at a British university and the second to gain a university degree outside Africa. In 1952

⁵ It was common for early African leaders who led the anti colonial struggle to give themselves prestigious titles that reflected the African hierarchy that existed before colonialism. For instance, Kamuzu Banda gave himself the title of *ngwazi*, the dominant baboon, Mobutu referred to himself as *Mobutu Seseseko Kuku wa Zabanga* which has reference to a coq, a dominant rooster. Kwame nkrumah referred himself to *Osagyefo*, meaning the redeemer. Nkrumah had done bible studies and his title shows preference to Christianity. All these leaders saw themselves as the fathers of their nations. Nyerere was a philosopher and he proved to be one.

⁶ Information derived from conversations with Dr Hadjivayanis, Rome, March 2008.

he returned to Tanganyika with a Master of Arts Degree in Economics and History. He was later awarded several honorary degrees by various universities.⁷

According to Smith (1998), Nyerere began to develop his particular vision of connecting socialism with African communal living while in Edinburgh. He was highly influenced by early European ideas of Fabianism, an intellectual movement, whose purpose was to advance the socialist cause gradually by reforming the system rather than having a revolution. Nyerere was not unique in his exposure. Jawaharlal Nehru of India framed his country's economic policy following Fabianistic lines. The kind of socialism that Fabianism advocated was practised by a certain Robert Owen, an industrialist who was a cotton manufacturer, who had tried to improve the working and social lives of his employees.⁸ He worked towards a model of future welfare systems in Europe. For example, workers were given all the modern rights of free education and free health. His ideas gave way to early trade union and co-operative movements. Nyerere wanted to apply these European socialist ideas for social reform into African conditions of his native Tanganyika. At that particular time, most rural communities in Tanganyika had a communal way of life with collective ownership of means of livelihood with the exception of places where cash crops had already taken roots.⁹ Therefore, Nyerere was convinced that the given communism could be the basis of building African Socialism, *Ujamaa*, which would bring development to the country.

Upon his return to Tanganyika he taught History, English and Swahili at St. Francis' College (currently known as Pugu Secondary school). His translation of Shakespeare, *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969) was first performed at this school. In 1953 he

⁷ Edinburgh, (UK), Duquesne (USA), Cairo (Egypt), Nsukka (Nigeria), Ibadan (Nigeria), Monrovia (Liberia), Toronto (Canada), Howard (USA), Ljubljana (Yugoslavia), National Economy, Pyongyang, (Korea), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Havana (Cuba), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), National University of Lesotho (Lesotho) and Philippines (Manila Philippines)

⁸ See Pollard and Salt (1971).

⁹ See Rweyemamu (1973).

was elected president of the Tanganyika African Association, TAA. Previously, TAA had been the Tanganyika branch of the African Association which was formed in the early 40s. The Zanzibar branch was led by ex-slaves, one of the prominent ex-slaves was Lloyd Boyd educated at Kiungani, possibly a colleague of Edwin Brenn who in collaboration with Johnson, translated *Alfu lela ulela*.¹⁰ From the African Association sprouted the Zanzibar African Association and the Tanganyika African Association.¹¹ In 1954 Nyerere transformed the Tanganyika African Association into TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) which was more politically oriented. It was the political party that would lead the country to independence. Nyerere resigned from teaching soon after founding this party and concentrated on politics. He entered the Colonial Legislative council in 1958 and was elected Chief Minister in 1960.¹²

In 1961 Tanganyika was granted self governance, *madaraka* and Nyerere became its first Prime Minister. A year later, Nyerere was elected President of Tanganyika when it became a *Jamhuri*, Republic. In 1964 Nyerere was instrumental in the union between the islands of Zanzibar and the mainland Tanganyika to form the current United Republic of Tanzania. Nyerere remained the President of Tanzania from 1962 until 1985.

It is while he was in power that Nyerere implemented his socialist economic programme of *Ujamaa* which was announced in the Arusha Declaration.¹³ *Ujamaa* influenced the thinking and behaviour of the people. It penetrated into the way in which people, especially the masses, thought and acted or rather the way they were expected to act. Nyerere sought to place Tanzania irrevocably on the road to being an African socialist society. He introduced a stringent leadership code so as to contain

¹⁰ See the previous chapter.

¹¹ See Iliffe, J (1979).

¹² See Iliffe, J (1979 and Sharif & Ferguson (1991).

¹³ The Arusha Declaration was made by Nyerere on the 5th February 1967. It outlines the principles of *Ujamaa* for the development of Tanzania's socialist economy through self-reliance in locally administered villages.

corruption and to block the emergence of private economic activities by senior party and government leaders and officials. His government nationalized the heights of the economy including foreign banks, foreign-owned plantations and important sectors of the then existing industrial sector. It also expropriated household properties that were rented out and not occupied by their owners. With these measures, there was mass exodus of foreigners from Tanzania, largely of Asian and European descent. They migrated to Europe, USA and Canada.

Initially *Ujamaa* villages were based on voluntary initiatives but with the slow development of the given villages, in 1975 villagization became compulsory. All villagers were forced into and moved into *Ujamaa* villages.¹⁴ Peasants were therefore moved from their rural holdings to newly created villages where they could farm collectively. Nyerere aimed at regulating private economic activities.

The education system was reformed to ensure that young people would embrace the values and acquire the skills appropriate to a national society of equals. A new curriculum was introduced in schools, 'education for self reliance' (Nyerere, 1968), which challenged the colonial education of preparing youths for the white collar jobs. Education for self reliance emphasized learning of skills related to the development of the existing sectors of the economy. But as the back bone of the economy was agriculture, it was greatly emphasized in schools, especially in primary schools that students be taught agriculture and animal husbandry. To reach this goal Swahili was introduced as the national language and also the medium of instruction for primary schools. English remained the medium of instruction in secondary school and higher institutions including the University.

In this respect, books had to be translated into Swahili. Swahili was supposed to be the vehicle through which would be propagated national consciousness and also

¹⁴ For more see Michaela Von Freyhold (1981).

disseminate the ideas of *Ujamaa*. Literature became an important index of socio-political developments. It became a vehicle for the reproduction of dominant political values and for dissenting opinions and ideas. According to Mazrui, 'African literature has, in fact, been a meeting point between African creativity and African political activity at large'. Writers use literature as 'an exercise in political observation and recording' (Mazrui 1978:9). As the founder of his national ideology, Nyerere's choice of translation conformed to what he wanted to achieve.

Apart from the Shakespeare's translations, *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) and *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969), Nyerere has also published widely including *Freedom and Unity* (1966), *Ujamaa* (1968), *Freedom and Socialism* (1968), *Nyerere on Socialism* (1969), *Ujamaa - Essays on Socialism* (1973) *Binadamu na Maendeleo* (1974), *Crusade for Liberation* (1978)

Nyerere died on 14th October 1999 while being treated at the St. Thomas Royal Hospital in London, United Kingdom. In his state funeral the masses gathered for three consecutive days to pay their last respect.¹⁵ The African statesman, author, great African intellectual was later laid to rest at his home village Butiama in the Mara region followed by forty days of national mourning. Although overshadowed by neo-liberal policies, the remnants of his legacy still persist in Tanzania today.

5.6 Criteria for Choice of Translation

Writers and translators are not often the creators of political ideologies. They are normally the mediators, observers of their society who try to reflect what they see in their community. In this case, Nyerere is himself the creator of an ideology that was formalized in 1967, propagated through 1985 when he handed over political power to

¹⁵ I was among those who gathered at the National Stadium to pay my last respects.

Ali Hassan Mwinyi¹⁶ although he still continued to influence some pockets of Tanzania's political culture.

In Toury's (1995) discussion of the product-, process- and function- oriented approaches to translation,¹⁷ he points out that this kind of research not only differs in terms of their focus, but also 'in terms of the data they elicit and process' (Toury, 1995:223). He goes on to point out that, the main problem is in the decision making process where the researcher is daunted with choosing the product that would reveal something relevant about what it is used to study.

... in product- and function-oriented studies, analysis is mainly applied to *reactions* to translations, whereas process-oriented empirical studies normally make use of elicited manifestations of the *gradual emergence* of a translated utterance, often to the complete neglect of its final version (Toury, 1995:223).

In this instance, I had to choose translations that could tell me something about norms of Swahili translations. Nyerere's influential position in Tanzania and the 'reactions' that have been discussed in a number of studies made me believe in his translation's ability to reveal a lot about the Swahili and the Swahili translation polysystem.

Norms influence not only the production, but also the selection and reception of translations (Schäffner, 1999:6). In the Swahili polysystem, the most common reason given for the choice of translating given books is the way in which the targeted audience can relate to the themes discussed in the text. In his translation of Sophocle's *Oedipus the King* which was first performed in 438BC, Samuel Mushi (1971:viii) gives his reason for translating this work as:

Madhumuni ya hadithi nyingi za kiyunani yalifanana sana na yale ya hadithi na ngano za kimila za jamii nyingi za Kiafrika; kwani zote zilikusudiwa ziyatukuze mambo ya roho na kuyaeneza maadili ya jamii kwa vizazi vilivyoko na vijavyo.

Gloss: The objectives of many Greek stories were similar to those of traditional African societal stories and fables; since all these stories were

¹⁶ The second president of the United republic of Tanzania. He was in power from 1985 to 1995.

¹⁷ See chapter two.

meant to glorify righteousness and disseminate values for the current and future generations.

In this case, although Sophocles wrote during antiquity, the values reflected in the work not only appeal to Mushi's given target but in reality they also reflect the ideals of *Ujamaa*. This is one of the reasons why *Mfalme Edipode* (1971) became one of the most treasured Swahili translations of the time.

Most critics agree that Nyerere's choice of the two works out of thirty seven plays of Shakespeare is largely due to 'the universality of the themes to Africa, particularly to Tanzania' (Mwaifuge 2002:1). Other scholars argue that the choice is largely due to the fact that Nyerere wanted to prove that Swahili, an African language could transmit works of great authors such as Shakespeare.¹⁸

It is possible that Nyerere made his choice following the important role that Shakespeare must have played in the Anglophone colonial education that he had received. Like any other colonization, the British Empire education in Tanganyika emphasized English as well as English Literature. An individual was considered learned if he had a good command of English language and could recite and quote Shakespeare whenever appropriate. To crown what one has been saying, an elite would quote Shakespeare rather than the Bible for example. This could also have influenced his choice of Shakespeare rather than any other writer at the time. The translation also contributed to his assertion as a great intellectual and a great teacher or '*mwelimu*'.

In my interview with Prof Mulokozi, director of the Swahili Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam, TUKI, he advanced that Nyerere's choice of translating *Julius Caesar*, which he translated twice, lies in the way that the play tackles political and governmental issues. Most critics also attribute this as his reason for translation,

¹⁸ Interview with Professor Mulokozi, TUKI, 1st July 2004.

Nyerere as a historian translated Julius Caesar probably due to Shakespeare's rejection to the authorities in power then who, in his view were nothing but dictatorial, power mongers, intriguers and murderers. But history is about the past, present and the future. Nyerere is thus alluding to African countries, in particular those whose government leaders selected by people are overthrown by modern day Brutuses (Mwaifuge 2002:3).

Fundamental questions that the *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* ideologies would have wanted to address are dealt with in this play. These include questions of leadership, the role of the government vis-à-vis the ruling classes and citizens in general and most important for Nyerere would have been the factors that lead to one being a hated leader and in the end, a dictator. In this context, Julius Nyerere probably identified himself with Julius Caesar not only as his name's sake, but also in portraying himself as a leader within the framework of one party state.¹⁹

Generally translations do tend to 'fit in with the dominant, or one of the dominant, ideological and poetical currents...' (Lefevere, 1992:8). In this light, *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) may have been the perfect place for Nyerere to inculcate his ideology through the presentation of a foreign work that his people could be made to relate to. When delving into the extent to which Nyerere's work may be ideologically oriented, one has to think of the book's title. 'A merchant' is translated as 'a capitalist'. Granted, 'translators decide, on their own, on the basis of the best evidence they have been able to gather, what the most effective strategy is to bring a text across in a certain culture at a certain time'(ibid, 20). In the *Ujamaa*²⁰ backdrop to which Nyerere was translating, 'a merchant' was 'a capitalist', just as a plantation owner was a feudal lord. It is obvious that one of Nyerere's reasons for translating

¹⁹ When this play was first staged at Pugu Secondary School, it was reported that a large audience had gathered including Nyerere's mother. During the staging of this play, the latter marched outside when the time came for Caesar to be killed. Nyerere writes in the preface to the second edition of the play that her act was the result of the power of the actors in bringing the scene across. (Nyerere, 1969:vii) Nevertheless, her exit fueled rumours about the similarities between Nyerere and his protagonist (interview with Dr G Hadjivayanis, Rome, 8th March 2008).

²⁰ Ujamaa is a political ideology that was founded by Nyerere, Tanzania's first president. The term means 'family hood' or African socialism. Its main principles are: equality, respect for human dignity and sharing of the resources which are produced by the efforts of all. It is organized around co-operative villages where everyone works and none is meant to exploit.

this work lay ultimately in his desire to expose to the masses what he saw as the claws of exploiters at work.

There used to be a daily programme on Radio Tanzania called *Mazungumzo baada ya Habari* (discussions after the News) presented by Paul Sozigwa.²¹ This programme became extremely important and a great success for *Ujamaa*. Its contents were prepared by the Kivukoni college built to create political cadres for the party. Almost everyone with a radio, in both urban and rural areas listened to this programme. There was often a story and a moral lesson to be learned from the story. This would always be linked to *Ujamaa*. Capitalism would be exposed as *Unyama* (beastly) and praises for the values of *Ujamaa* were linked to *ubinadamu* (humanity). This moralistic programme had a profound moralistic influence on the thinking of the masses. People came to hate capitalism and all it encompasses. Both of Nyerere's works were discussed at length in this programme. To date, it is interesting to see how people would rarely say that all is well for them, materialistically. In fact, people would always shun being labelled as rich, property owners and exploiters. Entrepreneurial ideas are only currently beginning to emerge, the term *mjasiriamali* is a current coinage meaning entrepreneur. *Mjasiri* means courageous, *mali* is wealth.

In *The Merchant of Venice* (1967), issues of religion, race and money are dealt with in great detail. Attention is put upon the relationship between commerce and race. Nyerere's utmost interest must have been commerce which he interpreted in accordance with his own personal and national ideology. Nyerere inculcates the ideas of socialism where trade for personal profit is supposedly done by capitalists who exploit the masses. Critics of the Swahili translation have noted that Nyerere associated Shylock the moneylender to wealth and Antonio who borrowed money, to poverty. 'Objectively then it means, Shylock represents the developed countries and

²¹ He translated Okot P'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* (1966) into *Wimbo wa Lawino* (1975) and also the *The Report of the South Commission* (1990) for which he was commissioned by Nyerere..

Antonio who borrowed money is linked to poverty and therefore symbolises the developing countries' (Mwaifuge, 2002:3).

This symbolism cannot be completely rejected although Nyerere's translation of the title as *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) literally translates as capitalists in the plural. I would argue that in translating this drama, Nyerere referred to both Shylock and Antonio as capitalists. Both of them had wealth. The view in the West is that it was only Antonio who was regarded as the merchant but to Nyerere, both characters, together with their entourage, are regarded as exploiters or capitalists, each using different means to 'exploit'.

Not only is the title in the plural, but also Nyerere believed that developing an income related structure is inconsistent with social equality. In one of his speeches, Nyerere advanced that 'we are committed to the philosophy of African socialism and basic to this is the principle of human equality. One of our concerns must therefore be to prevent the growth of a class structure in our society'.²² Nyerere disagreed with the entire concept of social classes and found that inhuman. One of the main ideas behind the *Ujamaa* ideology was the development of a classless society. One can advance therefore that, following this inclination, Nyerere might have chosen to translate this work because the classes and situation portrayed in the work related to that of Tanzania right until the Arusha declaration. Of course, the surface themes of hatred and greed between individuals were also important concepts that could exist in any society. Nyerere gave Shakespeare an extra edge by giving the drama political, economic and ideological presentation.

Historically it was the Indians who were money lenders and who financed trade (Shivji, 1976). The Arab and Swahili would borrow from the Indian so as to conduct their day to day affairs. Later on, when the borrower could not repay what he

²² From a speech of Nyerere's in February 1963, reprinted in *Vigilance Africa* 1(3), Nov. 1964 and quoted in Pratt, 1992:226.

had taken, the Indian usurer had the power to take away the borrower's wealth. For instance, in Zanzibar the large scale Arab farmer was compelled to sell his cloves in the form of a loan before it was harvested. This way, the Arab felt safe for a while although in reality the Indian would actually make a lot more profit depending on the market. Often the Arab, unintentionally, would end up in debt.²³ Since banks could not finance the poor African, the Indian acted as the financier once again, accepting *poni*, pawning valuable items such as jewellery, bicycles, furniture and anything of value.

The Indian as the financier is shown in Tippu Tip's autobiography where he talks of going to see Set Ladda, a Banyan, who agreed to give him 'goods to the value of 50000 dollars' (Tippu Tip, 1966:35) but, after being summoned by Sir Taria Topan, one of the wealthiest Indians at the time, he preferred the latter as financier rather than the Banyan. The Banyan refused to take back his goods but, luckily, a brother of Tippu Tip agreed to take the goods in his place so that Tippu Tip got financed by Taria Topan from whom he 'took a great quantity of goods'(ibid), as much as he wanted. The role played by the Indian is similar to that of the Jew in Europe. With time, just like it was in Europe the economic differences became racial. The Indian became the figure of hate because that was the person that the masses came in contact with in market relations, not the colonial master who was in reality the one benefiting the most. It is the portrayal of this kind of relationship, I believe, that made Nyerere choose this work.

5.7 Reflection of Titles in Swahili translations

As he contextualizes translation, Toury (1995) comes to a number of realisations that are applicable to the current study. He advances that:

²³ For more see Abdul and Fergusson (1991).

The decisions made by an individual translator while translating a single text are far from erratic. Rather, even though by no means all-embracing, they tend to be highly *patterned* (Toury, 1995:147).

Similarly, he points out that: ‘the observed regularities of behaviour can be attributed to some *governing principles*’ (ibid). So far, in regards to a number of Swahili translation titles of the post-colonial period, a certain pattern can be observed and this pattern has certainly stemmed from the political atmosphere of the 1960’s and 1970’s. Toury (ibid) continues to argue that ‘the strongest of these principles originate in the target system itself, the one where...the act of translation is initiated and whose needs it is designed to satisfy’. With respect to the above mentioned quote, I believe that *Ujamaa*, the strongest principle at the time originated from Tanzania and translation during *Ujamaa* had to fill an important literary gap.

We find that most translations that were undertaken in the immediate post-colonial period of the 60s, 70s and even the 80s have a tendency to reflect aspects of nationalism and freedom through concepts of bravery, unity, strength or African oriented ideologies of the time. For example, Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) has been translated by Clement Ndulute into *Shujaa Okonkwo* (1973), meaning ‘Okonkwo the Brave’. Okonkwo is the main character in the novel and he fights colonialism and rejects the ideals of the West until the end; in this respect, Okonkwo was a brave African man. Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Micere Mugo’s *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1976) which depicts the circumstances surrounding the trial of one of the leaders of the Mau Mau revolution, Dedan Kimathi, has been translated as *Mzalendo Kimathi* (1983) meaning ‘Kimathi the patriot’. *A man of the people* (1966) has been translated as *Mwakilishi wa watu* (1977) which means ‘the representative of the people’ and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (1967) as *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) meaning ‘Capitalists of Venice’.

Various scholars have criticized Nyerere's word choice in translating *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969). For instance, discussing the role of the journalist as the invisible translator, Batibo (1990:105) in 'Correctness and incorrectness in Kiswahili translation' advances that ideology and attitudes can affect the end product: 'Nyerere translated 'merchant' as *bepari* rather than *mfanyabiashara* which would have been more correct'. Batibo continues to note that, in regards to the media's perception of this, 'attitudes of this nature often cause journalists to have a bias towards the ideologies and positions of their countries' (ibid). This in turn affects the masses whose judgements are often directed by the media. Interestingly, when asked to translate the phrase 'the merchant of Venice', most students at Zanaki high school rendered this phrase exactly as it is translated by Nyerere. Only two students translated the phrase literally. This may be because they are aware of Nyerere's translation, although it may be that the propaganda inculcated by Nyerere has been well and truly instilled within them.²⁴

As previously pointed out, Nyerere translated *The Merchant of Venice* (1967) as *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) rather than '*Mfanyabiashara wa Venisi*' in line with the principles of Ujamaa.²⁵ '*Mfanyabiashara*' literally means 'merchant' whereas '*Mabepari*' refers to 'capitalists' or 'the Bourgeoisie'. Nyerere's interpretation is also rendered in the plural which means that, in his view, the drama contains a number of capitalists. Nevertheless, Nyerere does acknowledge the fact that Antonio is a 'merchant' when he translates the following court scene:

Poshia: Nani mfanya biashara, na nani ni Yahudi? (IV.1.178).

Portia: who is the merchant, and who is the Jew? (IV.1.68).

²⁴ Questionnaire handed out at Zanaki High School, Upanga, Dar es Salaam on Friday the 3rd of November 200.

²⁵ See above 'criteria for choice of translation'.

In this instance, Nyerere does not equate the term ‘merchant’ with ‘capitalist’ making it obvious that he did not aim at changing Shakespeare’s intention of referring to Antonio as the merchant. He simply aimed at a title that was ideologically loaded since, in Nyerere’s eyes, most characters in the play were exploiters, active capitalists.

The stance taken by Nyerere in this instance is not unique. We find for instance Mushi arguing that he tended to be ‘guided less by the imperative of fidelity to the original than by sensitivity to the Swahili lingo-cultural milieu of the audience’ (Mushi, 1968:vi-vii, cited by Mazrui 2007:126). In his translation of *Mfalme Edipode* (1971) Mushi advances that:

Maigizo huwafaidi zaidi wasikilizaji na watazamaji kama yakioneshwa katika hali inayoambatana na utamaduni wao au hali inayoonyesha mazoea yao na jinsi wanavyoishi katika mazingira yao (Mushi, 1971:xi).

Gloss: Drama appeals more to its audience if staged in a context that is close to their culture or a situation that portrays their habits and ways of living in their environment.

The translator advocates familiarity and goes on to advise those who would be interested in staging this play that the words uttered by Oedipus could have been those of African chiefs such as ‘Mirambo..., Rindi..., Mazengo..., Mkwawa..., Mutesa.... Shaka...’ (ibid, xii). It is through this kind of pragmatic equivalence that translators such as Nyerere and Mushi bring the text home, making it easier for the Swahili to relate to their work and therefore absorb it as theirs.

5.8 An Analysis of the Translation

Translators of Shakespeare are faced with a number of problems including:

The many textual cruxes, the obscure allusions, Shakespeare’s archaisms and daring neologisms, his contrastive use of words of Anglo-Saxon and Romance origin, his use of homely images, of mixed metaphors and of iterative imagery, the repetitions of thematic key words, the personification (which in some languages may lead to contradictions between natural sex and grammatical gender), Shakespeare’s puns, ambiguities and malapropisms, his play with y- and

th- forms of address, his elliptical grammar and general compactness of expression, his flexible iambic patterns (not easily reproducible in certain other prosodic systems), the musicality of his verse, the presence of performance-oriented theatrical signs inscribed in the text and so on (Delabastita, 2001:223).

Indeed, this is one of Shakespeare's work from which some of the expressions used have become part and parcel of everyday English. Sayings such as 'love is blind' and 'all that glitters is not gold' originate from this play. In his translation, Nyerere has largely respected both the content and form of the play. The play's setting has remained the same, Venice, although he makes the city sound Swahili, *Venisi*.

Nyerere's translation uses standard Swahili which makes it easier for the modern Swahili speaker to understand the work than would a modern English speaker reading Shakespeare's original. Also, as Nyerere's second translation, *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) experienced the benefit of being the product of a translator who had already tested the waters. Nyerere had needed to re-translate his first translation and in the process corrected what he believed himself to have rendered incorrectly. He added a number of lines that he had previously omitted and of most importance, he changed the names so they would sound Bantu.²⁶ In this respect, Nyerere's re-translation was considerably more domestic in orientation. In his initial translation of *Julius Caesar*, Nyerere had preserved all the names in their English spelling as they appeared in the English original. In the revised edition, however, these were phonetically Swahilized. The title changed from *Julius Caezar* to *Juliasi kaizari* (1969). Nyerere writes in his introduction that initially he had not meant to publish the translation; thus he had been his own audience. In other words, it was a translation by Nyerere for Nyerere himself. He was however persuaded to publish the work and soon found that the translation was criticized for not being a smooth read. Bearing this in mind, Nyerere decided to make the work familiar to the Swahili. The audience reaction to the re-translation made him comfortable enough to translate *The Merchant*

²⁶ See Introduction to Nyerere's *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969: vi).

of Venice. As a sign of having learnt from experience, *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) has employed Bantu versions of the names from the word go. Nyerere has taken the liberty of familiarising what would sound foreign to the Swahili reader. Thus, he has preserved all of the characters names and where the names would be unpronounceable to the Swahili, he has adapted them to suit the Swahili phonetics, making it easier for his target audience to pronounce. This can be interpreted as a form of appropriation. In translation, this happens when a text has a high level of ‘linguistic features related to the source culture. Such dialect or unfamiliar lexical items can be highlighted as defamiliarized elements in the text, or be domesticated in some way, or be circumvented altogether’ (Tymoczko, 1999:21).

Similarly, proper names that contain unfamiliar phonemes or are made up of foreign phonemic sequences are often Swahilized. Names carry with them the identity of those they portray. Manini (1996:171) sums up the question of names, their forms and functions when he writes:

translators can choose to leave all proper names – both conventional and meaningful ones – in their original form, thus leaving the foreign cultural setting as an aspect of the ‘otherness’ of the original text fully intact and actually emphasizing it. On the other hand, they can also decide to translate those names that have a more or less equivalent form in the target language, or indeed all names, naturalizing the whole nomenclature of a translated text and helping to integrate it into the culture and textual habits of its prospective audience.

In the case of proper names, we find that historically, there has not really been a rule of the thumb. During the colonial period, we find that Johnson for instance tended to render the proper names as they were in the source texts, emphasising their ‘otherness’ but would add a Swahili title to these names. Thus, we find that even in the revised edition of *Mashimo ya Mfalme Sulemani* (1960), there is: *Bwana* Henry Curtis, *Bwana* Good and Alan Quartermain. On the other hand, Alice is Swahilized as *Elisi* in the translation of *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), thus aiming for domestication and most probably integration. The strategies employed by the latter also echo in the

post-colonial period. We find Nyerere translating Portia as *Poshia*, an easily pronounceable version of the name. Similarly, Mushi rendered Oedipus as *Edipode*, Ismenus as *Ismeno* and Creon as *Kreoni*.

The above echo Tymoczko's (1999:21) argument that source texts have always included 'cultural and linguistic elements that are given for the translator and that typically involve factors that are particularly problematic for the receiving audience'. Faced with this, Swahili translators could choose a 'fairly aggressive presentation of unfamiliar cultural elements in which differences, even one likely to cause problems for a receiving audience are highlighted' (ibid). Or, they could make 'an assimilative presentation in which likeness or 'universality' is stressed and cultural differences are muted and made peripheral to the central interests of the literary work' (ibid).

In *The Merchant of Venice* we find that names such as Lorenzo and Antonio's have not been changed since they end with a vowel. But those that end with a consonant, for instance Shylock becomes *Shailoki*, Jessica - *Jessika* and Portia - *Poshia*. We can see here that, for the Swahili to pronounce these names as they should be, Nyerere needed to insert a vowel at the end of the names. Similarly, the consonant C has been substituted by K, the Y has been substituted by I and so on. Nyerere used the strategy of swahilizing the names so as to preserve their pronunciation while making them pronounceable to the Swahili.

It has been argued that Nyerere has 'ostensibly attempted to be as 'faithful' to the original texts as possible' (Mazrui, 2007:127). Although ranging high is the belief among critics that Nyerere seems to have been 'informed by the idea that the best translation is the one that is closest to the original in form, meaning and style' (ibid). Nyerere is thus questioned for having believed in the idea of 'faithfulness in principle'; it is questioned whether he actually is faithful. Mazrui supports his

argument by advancing that Nyerere did re-translate *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969) because he wanted to rid his work of some errors.

Let us consider some choices and strategies that Nyerere uses in his endeavour. Examples will be sought through culture and language. From the language used in the translation will be examined the linguistic grammatical aspect including the syntax, lexical and morphological incidences and from the cultural aspect will be examined the geographical, attitudinal and literary incidences.

5.9 Language Use in the Translation

This study is not prescriptive in nature which means that, as discussed in chapter three, it does not set out to pin point the right or wrong in the translation. That kind of critique has been historically done by a number of scholars including Mbaabu (1985), who criticizes the fact that, for example, in *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969), Nyerere translated ‘Tell every noise to keep quiet or remain silent’ (Act 1, Scene II) as ‘*ambia kila kelele inyamaze*’. Mbaabu argues that the literal translation is not correct since the word noise, ‘*kelele*, is inanimate and it cannot, therefore be expected to take a command; the command should have been directed at the people in the translation’ (Mbaabu, 1985:118). The latter seems to have forgotten that, not only is noise inanimate in English as well, but also, as an artist, Nyerere, just like Shakespeare, was granted poetic license.

Some of the most popular English language sayings were introduced by Shakespeare through his various works. *The Merchant of Venice* (1967) is no different. Consider Nyerere’s language choice in translating these where the ST denotes the Source Text and TT denotes Target Text. Similarly for comparative and analytical purposes, some words have been highlighted.

ST: Jessica: Love is blind (II.6.36).

- TT: *Jessika: Penzi ni kipofu* (II:6:426).
- ST: Launcelot: In the twinkling of an eye (II.2.167).
- TT: *Launseloti: Kufumba na kufumbua* (II.2.219-20).
- ST: Shylock: My own flesh and blood (III.1.34).
- TT: *Shailoki: Mwili wangu na damu yangu mwenyewe* (III.1.34).
- ST: Morocco: All that glisters is not gold (II.7.67).
- TT: *Moroko: Kila kitu king'aacho usidhani ni dhahabu* (II.7.531).
- ST: Launcelot: It is a wise father that knows his own child (II.2.74).
- TT: *Launseloti: ni baba mwenye busara amjuaye mwanae* (II.2.129-30).
- ST: Lorenzo Let it serve for table-talk (III.5.84).
- TT: *Lorenzo: hayo yawe sogla la mezani* (III.5.660).

Nyerere has used both the target oriented and source oriented approaches in translating these sayings. Toury (1995) explains that the source oriented approach is one that leans towards the source text, the prototext. The target oriented approach is one that leans towards the target culture. The latter has the function of creating and establishing target literary texts.

Faced with foreign sayings, Nyerere employed different approaches. For instance, in Swahili, 'love is blind' is the direct equivalence of the largely coastal saying '*Mahaba ni wazimu*' which means 'love is madness' or *Mahaba Ugonjwa* literally, 'love is sickness', although the implication is love overwhelms. This concept is also present in the English culture where love is seen as a malady. Nyerere does not employ the direct Swahili equivalent but prefers to do a word for word rendering of Shakespeare's.

While translating 'All that glisters is not gold' he uses the strategy of explication²⁷ whereby he explains to the audience that they should not think or

²⁷ Technique of making explicit what is implicit.

imagine that everything that glitters is gold , ‘do not imagine that all that glitters is gold’. Thus, his speech is directed at the audience, he is warning them. Interestingly, the Swahili have an equivalence of this saying, *ving’aavyo vyote si dhahabu* which literally means all that glitters is not gold. That authentic Swahili saying happens to be a word for word equivalence of Shakespeare’s. One wonders why he did not employ it especially since it has been absorbed by the Swahili society; songs have been sung, for instance, a certain love *taarab* song first sang by Machaprala says: ‘*ving’aavyo vyote, vyote si dhahabu, vingine vya shaba... shaba kutu maumbile*’ which translates as ‘all that glitters is not gold, some of it is copper... rust is inherent to copper’. Nyerere’s translation sends a warning rather than a stating of facts. This is most probably the resurfacing of the teacher in him. On the other hand, he uses an authentic equivalence of ‘in the twinkling of an eye’ into ‘*Kufumba na kufumbua*’.

At first glance, Nyerere’s choices may seem rather erratic. But it needs to be remembered that Shakespeare wrote the play using blank verse and the iambic pentameter in most parts. The iambic pentameter is quite common in English verse. Shakespeare’s style means that his verse was usually unrhymed and consisted of ten syllables in each line read with a stress on every second syllable. Nyerere reproduced this by using sixteen syllables in each line. More about the style will be discussed in the Style sub section below. Following the style restrictions, Nyerere was not always at liberty to consider what can be interpreted as the ‘authentic Swahili choices’. Seen in this light, his choices do not seem as erratic as one may initially consider. At the same time, translators do not always follow the same pattern throughout their work, there are instances when they foreignize and instances when they domesticate and yet still, instances when they combine the two strategies.

The choice between the above mentioned strategies seem to have weighed on Swahili translators especially in the post-colonial period. For instance, Mushi informs

his readers that he has tended to use Swahili sayings whenever he could. He writes in his Introduction to *Makbeth* (1968) that, in his translation he has used common Swahili sayings instead of the word for word strategy ‘...nimezitafsiri kwa kutumia methali za kawaida za Kiswahili, badala ya kufuatisha neno kwa neno’ (Mushi, 1968: vii).

Similarly, while translating *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969), Nyerere found himself with a term that almost carries and defines the whole play ‘Et tu, Brute?’ which is a Latin phrase that means, ‘You too, Brutus?’, or ‘And you, Brutus?’ These are the last words poetically uttered by Julius Caesar when he was shocked that Brutus, whom he saw as an ally, was involved in his murder. Thus, the words represent a quotation that is widely used in the English language as the epitome of betrayal. For Nyerere, it seems that capturing these great pronouncements was better done using simple language. Thus, in the Swahili translation, Nyerere did not use a different language to parallel the Latin, but rendered them using the word for word literal Swahili equivalent: ‘*hata na wewe, Buruto?*’ (III.1.91) which literally means ‘even you, Brutus?’

There are also instances when Nyerere used traditional Swahili sayings as equivalent. Consider the following example:

ST: Portia: **A gentle riddance.** Draw the curtains: go. (II. 7. 78).

TT : *Poshia : Ni kuvuja kwa pakacha. Vuta pazia. Nendeni.* (II.7.544)

Gloss: it is the leaking of the palm leaf basket.

The rendering of the equivalent Swahili saying: *kuvuja kwa pakacha ni nafuu ya Mchukuzi* which means, ‘the leaking of the palm leaf basket brings comfort for the bearer’, brings the text home. A *pakacha* is a typical Swahili item, largely prevalent along the East African coast where palm trees grow in abundance. It is the insertion

of such familiar items that contributed to making Nyerere's translation a Swahili work as opposed to the translation of a foreign work.²⁸

Since Nyerere's translation was largely dependent on the presentation of 16 syllables for each line, it needs to be pointed out that it has been among the works that have been criticized for violating linguistic structures. For instance Mwansoko(1990:140 -141) observes that, a large number of translations from European languages, more specifically from English have an English oriented order. There are structural language differences in such word order that often tend to divert from the meanings advocated by these concepts and end up implying the opposite or not making any sense at all.

According to Mwansoko (ibid), such violations are observed in the following example:

SL: Antonio: I have sent **twenty** out to seek for you (II:6:66).

TL: *Antonio: Nimetuma **ishirini watu** kuwatafuteni* (II:6:457).

In normal circumstances the noun precedes the modifiers which means that the 'correct' structure is: *watu ishirini*. Nyerere's structural change is seen as a violation of a set Swahili noun phrase. Violation of set language structures can be interpreted as violation of what many consider to be the norm. Let us consider another example :

SL: Morocco: So is Alcides beaten by his page

And so may I, **blind fortune** leading me (II:1:36).

TL: *Moroko: Ndiyo ma'na Alikide kushindwa na boi wake*

*Na mimi kwa kuongozwa naye **kipofu bahati*** (II:1:38).

In this case the translation copied the structure of the original and is also a word for word translation. In all honesty, it cannot be easily understood. One has the

²⁸ See Mazrui (2007).

impression that a blind person is being referred to; Bahati is a common name for both sexes. The overall impression is that a blind person by the name of Bahati is acting as leader. This is so despite the fact that Nyerere has not employed a capital letter to try and distinguish the fact that he is not referring to a person.

Nyerere borrowed robes of Swahili poets who are known for bending language to fit their styles. Due to this poetic style, we find that for instance faced with constructions that are a string of negatives together with conjunctions, Nyerere either ignored the structures or made an affirmative construction.

For example:

SL: Bassanio: 'Tis is **not unknown** to you, Antonio (I:1:133).

TL: *Bassanio: Wafahamu, Antonio... (I:1:122).*

A direct translation for the term *Wafahamu* is 'you know' or 'you are aware of'. Despite the difference in form and in construction, both messages convey the same meaning.

Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that there were instances when his supposed mistranslation is not due to style,

Example:

SL: Shylock:...but I will not eat with you, drink with you, **nor** pray with you (I:3:35-6).

TL: *Shailoki: ...lakini kamwe sitakula nanyi, kunywa nanyi au kusali nanyi (I:3:361-2).*

In the Swahili the conjunction *au* is normally used to show alternates; it is the direct translation of 'or'. For a 'faithful' translation, *wala* should have been used. Both *au* and *wala* are made up of two syllables thus Nyerere was not adhering to any particular rule.

5.9.1 Vocabulary

By looking at the chosen vocabulary, this study will be analysing the shifts and translation relationships which make up the second stage in Toury's (1995:102) exemplary methodological exercise. Shifts that exist between the source and target languages and culture make loss and gain in translation inevitable. 'Once the principle is accepted that sameness cannot exist between two languages it becomes possible to approach the question of loss and gain in the translation process' (Bassnett MacGuire, 1998:30). This happens when concepts do not exist in the target culture. For instance, we find that Nyerere translates the wine from the Rhine region as '*mvinyo wa **Rhine**,*' (I.2.288) making it apparent that the wine is foreign. At other times he was forced to generalize. For example:

SL: Portia: If a **throstle** sing, he falls straight a-capering (I.2.49-50).

TL: *Poshia: Kama **ndege** akiimba mara atanza kuchachawa* (I.2.253).

A throstle is a kind of bird commonly known as a song thrush. It is normally brown above and black-spotted cream below. Many poets including Robert Browning have paid homage to the bird's melodic phrases which are distinctive. Unfortunately, although the throstle is a migratory bird, it does not travel into the Swahili speaking East Africa. Thus there is no term in Swahili that refers to it. Due to this reason, Nyerere generalizes the term and translates it as *ndege* meaning 'bird'.

This stance is not unique to Nyerere. In translating Ferdinand Oyono's *House boy* (1966), Kahaso and Mbwele translate the word 'his alsatian' (1966:27) as '*mbwa wake mkubwa*' (1976:22), which means 'his big dog'. This is because Swahili does not have the equivalence for the given dog's specific name.

Let us consider another example:

ST: Bassanio: I urge this childhood proof

Because what follows is **pure innocence** (I.1.143-4).

TT: *Bassanio: Nataja ya utotoni kwa kuwa yafuatayo*

*Ni ya **ujinga mtupu**, ya **ujinga wa kitoto**(I.1.156-7).*

It is interesting to see how the term ‘innocence’ is translated into Swahili. There does not seem to be an equivalent in Swahili although sometimes a child may be referred to as *malaika* which translates as ‘angel’. This is reflective of the perceived innocent and sin-free life of god’s angels. The translator tries to explain this as, ‘it is pure stupidity, childish stupidity’.

Nyerere also employs some Arabic vocabulary in his translation. These are not present in Shakespeare’s work and can be perceived as examples of ‘gain in translation’. Historically Arabic terminologies were linked with Islam, especially during colonialism, as has been seen in the previous chapter where Topan (1992) gives the example of pastor Roehl who translated the bible using mainland Swahili which does not contain vocabulary with Arabic turns in them. Nyerere inserts some Arabic words in the character of Shylock. These words are familiar to the Swahili therefore he does not italicize them.

For example:

*Shailoki: ...**thenashara** (I.3.427).*

*Shailoki: **La, la**, hakutwaa riba; **la**, jinsi unavyosema, (I.3.406).*

*Shailoki: Ho, **la, la, la, la**... (I.3.340).*

Thenashara is derived from Arabic for ‘twelve’. *La* is derived from Arabic for ‘No’. Interestingly, it is only into the character of Shylock, the Jew, that Nyerere inserts Arabisms. Shylock is a hated figure in the drama and although one can interpret Nyerere’s usage of Arabism as putting a stance towards certain positions concerning the arguments of whether Swahili should be de-Arabized or Arabized. I would argue that Nyerere was trying to linguistically differentiate him from the Venetians. At the same time, historically, traders along the Swahili coast were Arabs

from Yemen and Oman and they tended to quote prices in Arabic. They traded in various items including honey, sesame oil, livestock and of course, some traded in Slave and ivory.²⁹ By making Shylock speak in Arabic, the text is once again domesticated. It has to be noted however that, as seen above, the usurping that was done by Shylock was historically done by Indians.

Let us now consider an example that uses figurative language:

SL: Gratiano: And when I open my lips, **let no dog bark** (I.1.93).

TL: *Gratiano: Ninapoanza kusema, kila mtu anyamaze* (I.1.99).

Gloss: When I start talking, each person should keep quiet.

In the above example, had Nyerere wanted to use a source oriented approach, it would have worked well in Swahili. Culturally, the Swahili are not fond of dogs. They keep them in their compounds, mostly for security purposes but not as a pet whose value, as it sometimes happens in the West, would often count more than that of a fellow human. Their anathema for dogs maybe an influence of Islam where, should one be sniffed by a dog, one would need to do one's ablutions.

Similarly in most African cultures, when one is referred to as a dog, *Mbwa* in Swahili, it means that they have no respect for social code, and thus they do not conform to the society's mode of conduct. Dogs are useful for hunters and also as a form of security against intruders but their value would not amount to more than that. Thence the Swahili's view of a dog derives from both their African and Oriental, historically Islamic origins. It is for this reason that Oyono's foreign saying in *Boi* (1976) 'The dog of the King is the King of dogs' (pg 20), translated literally by Kahaso and Mbwele as '*mbwa wa mfalme ni mfalme wa mbwa*' (pg 16), makes

²⁹Two of my maternal ancestors were great traders and both came to East Africa from Yemen. Sadik al Hamdan came from the village of Hamdan in Yemen and traded in honey. There is a known Swahili song that praises his honey. '*Asali ya bwana sadiki, kuramba na kututuma*'. Another great great grandfather, Mahfudh al Genzel came from Hadhramout in Yemen and settled in Kilwa. He traded in Sesame seed oil. His house is said to have been the biggest in Kilwa. When the British were bombing the German governor in Kilwa, they bombed his house thinking it must have been the Governor's.

perfect sense to the Swahili. Nyerere's translation removes the sharpness that could have been brought across had he translated literally.

5.9.2 Style

As previously touched upon, Shakespeare used blank verse when he composed the play. He also used the iambic pentameter³⁰ for noble characters such as Antonio, Portia, and Bassanio whereas the commoners such as Gobbo and Lancelot talk in prose.

Nyerere has tried to preserve Shakespeare's verse style and has managed to conjure sixteen syllables in each line for most of the play. Similar to Shakespeare, he has used blank verse, *mashairi ya guni*. The main difference is that Shakespeare uses ten syllables whereas Nyerere uses sixteen. Another difference is that Nyerere does not differentiate between the nobility and the commoners. Interestingly, the other translator of Shakespeare, Mushi, does differentiate between characters of low calibre such as slaves and those from the nobility. Mushi does not employ any poetic form for the commoners.

Swahili poetry has tended to follow strict rules and regulations. Thus one would find that each line is expected to contain sixteen or twelve syllables which are referred to as '*mizani*'. Similarly, the last syllables and those of the 6th or 8th words also tend to rhyme. These are referred to as '*vina*'. Therefore, one would find that for instance, in a given poem, the last syllable is *ni* in all the lines. The poems that do not follow this strict rule are referred to as *Mashairi ya guni*.

³⁰ An 'iamb' is an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one. 'Penta' means 'five'. So 'iambic pentameter' is a pattern that consists of five iambs. It is the most common rhythm in English poetry.

Nyerere's style is generally viewed as defective by the traditionalists. Here is an example from a line of Nyerere's translation. There are sixteen syllables:

TT: *A/mba/cho/ ni/ta/ki/tu/nza/ ka/ma/ pe/te/ ya/ Ne/ri/ssa* (V.1.316-7).

In his quest for the sixteen syllables, Nyerere drops subject markers and tense markers from phrases. For instance, in the example given below, instead of writing, '*alimwamsha*' which has five syllables, he writes, '*limwamsha*' where the subject marker for him/her, 'a' is dropped off, leaving the term with four syllables:

SL: Solanio: The villain Jew with outcries **rais'd** the duke (II:8:4).

TL: *Solanio: Kisirani Myahudi 'limwamsha Sultani'* (II:8:550).

In the example given above, Nyerere reproduces the structure of the source text.

There are also instances when he agglutinates words or stretches the words out. In those instances, he tends to ignore the normal Swahili grammatical constructions. For instance the word *miezi* (3 syllables) which means 'months', is at times transcribed as *myezi* (2 syllables), which not only sounds short but also light. For the opposite reason, he transcribed Abraham who is known as Ibrahim by the Swahili as *Ibrahimu* (5 syllables), stretching out the word so it may sound long, heavy and fill up the required sixteen syllables. The same is apparent in Mushi's translations of Shakespeare where, similar to Nyerere he also aims for the sixteen syllables in each line. But this is often difficult and at times, such as in *Tufani* (1969) Mushi resorts to using twelve syllables.

Nyerere also makes ample use of repetition as an artistic device so as to emphasize. Thus we find the following examples:

SL: Salarino: Come, the full stop (III.1.13).

TL: *Salarino: Basi, Mwisho! Mwisho!* (III.1.16).

SL: Shylock: No, not take interest, not as you would say (I.3.75).

TL: *Shailoki : La, la, hakutwaa riba; la, jinsi unavyosema* (I.3.406).

It has to be remembered that a play is to be performed therefore Nyerere used repetitions to distinguish oral sounds. As he translated this, Nyerere was aware that his translation could be acted out. Therefore, despite being limited by the sixteen syllable style, he also included words that purposely sounded oral.

As a play, this translation was meant to be acted as well as to be read in private. Many cultures have had to adapt translations so they may fit into the target polysystem. For instance, Arabic plays that have been translated for the Hebrew stage have tended to be 'written by prose writers rather than playwrights and therefore include long didactic ideological or philosophical monologues that do not conform to Western models of stage performance, where characters are expected to dramatically justify their presence on stage' (Amin-Kochavi, 2008:25). Due to this, translators, writers and all those who work in the dramatics have had to adapt translations of Arabic literatures from other genres.

Swahili playwrights have tended to offer 'stage instructions' that can be referenced upon. These are normally found at the beginning of the play and also in different Acts where the setting of the stage is explained. We find this in Ebrahim Hussein's works for instance. Ebrahim Hussein is recognised as the best known Tanzania's Swahili playwright. His dissertation on the theatre in Tanzania has remained the standard reference work for students and actors alike although, his plays are best known and discussed following their significance in portraying Tanzania's political and social development rather than their stage instructions.³¹ The only instructions available fall along the following lines: 'enter Antonio, Salarino and Salanio', 'exit Portia' and 'Venice, bedroom, Shylock's home'. Nyerere has not included any stage instructions in the translation which means that he did not adapt the work so it could fit the confines of Swahili stage performance.

³¹ See discussion of Kinjeketile below under the 'mythical characters' sub-section.

On the other hand, Nyerere had to adapt stylistic devices that are abundantly used by Shakespeare. One such a device is the prominence of puns in the play. This play on words with similar sound but different meanings is quite important in Shakespeare's plays. Often puns create humour and demand an instinctive reaction from its audience. Puns achieve humour or emphasis by playing on ambiguities where two distinct meanings are suggested either by the same word or by similar-sounding words. For instance in Tanzania, during the height of the one party state era Nyerere propagated his single party policy of *chama kushika hatamu* (the party getting saddled) where the party had to be the supreme organ of political power. Nyerere employed this imagery of a man on a saddle. The masses, who did not benefit from this policy ridiculed the phrase and created a pun, *chama kushika utamu*, which meant that the policy would benefit and enrich those in power. *Utamu* means sweetness, thus the party would pave the way to sweetness for those in power.

Puns are culture and language specific because two ideas that are separate are put next to each other create a unified force that would deem an instant reaction from the audience. For instance:

Gratiano: We are the Jasons, we have won the **fleece** (III.2.242).

Salanio: I would you had won the **fleece** that he hath lost (III.2.243).

In mythology, 'Jason gathered the Argonauts who sought the golden fleece finding it in Colchis and winning it with the aid of Medea, the enchantress daughter of the King of Colchis; the latter like Portia's father confronted the Argonauts with a triple test of their wit' (Moelwyn, 1967:168).

The pun is built between *fleece* and *fleet*. Antonio's fleet of ships is referred to as fleece. Nyerere could not reproduce the pun since the source culture and the target culture are truly worlds apart. Faced with that, he could have employed the technique of compensation which involves 'making up for the loss of a source text effect by

recreating a similar effect in the target text through means that are specific to the target language and/or text' (Harvey, Keith, 2001:37). Nyerere could therefore have inserted his own pun but instead he chooses to render the word literally as *sufu*, which is its direct equivalent. As a result of linguistic barriers the pun does not resound in the Swahili since *sufu* and *meli* (fleet / ship) do not rhyme.

One of Shakespeare's most famous pun is that of the ring. The pun is introduced when Portia and Nerissa confront Bassanio and Gratiano about their rings. The men had been tricked by their disguised wives to hand over the rings. Portia pretends to be indignant and declares that she would not sleep with Bassanio until she sees the ring. Soon enough, the men discover the ruse and realize that the court clerk and his assistant to whom they had given their rings were in fact their wives in disguise. Then, Gratiano utters the last words in the play which means that their meaning is supposed to resonate in the minds of the audience when he remarks:

SL: Gratiano: Well, while I live I'll fear no other **thing**

So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's **ring** (V.1.306-7).

The pun is built around the words 'ring' and 'thing' which represent both the physical object and the sexual organs. The Swahili translation reads:

TL: Gratiano: *Lo, maisha yangu yote hakuna **kitu** kabisa*

*Ambacho nitakitunza kama **pete** ya Nerissa* (V.1.316-7).

Gloss: Well, there won't be anything in my entire life

That I will keep safe as I would Nerissa's ring.

The Swahili translation transmits Shakespeare's general meaning but the pun played between the words 'thing' and 'ring', which represent sexual fidelity, jealousy and control over spouses, does not come across in Swahili. This is because of the nature of the two languages. Unfortunately, *kitu* and *pete* do not have a similar sound, nor

would they imply any sexual innuendos when said next to each other. Thence the pun cannot be brought across.

Once again, the technique of compensation could have been employed but instead Nyerere opts for bringing across the text's general meaning. It is possible that Nyerere could not find equivalent puns that may have been employed since 'rings' and 'flowers' and all such romantic Western items do not hold the same position in the traditional Swahili society. Today in Tanzania most people who marry, whether in the villages or in cities, give each other a ring as symbol of their love. Even Muslim men, known to refute this tradition as '*uzungu*' which means 'western-oriented', wear silver wedding rings since there is a general belief that gold rings emit some feminine characteristics and reduce virility. But this concept is modern.

5.10 The Cultural Aspect

Literature is understood to reflect social realities and mirror society and its environment. *The Merchant of Venice* (1967) has a lot of terms that are culturally bound to the source Language (SL), English. Let us consider their reflection in the Target Language (TL).

'Food is for many the most sensitive and important expression of national culture; food terms are subject to the widest variety of translation procedures' (Newmark, 1988:97). Customs in relation to meals vary from country to country and sometimes within countries depending on social classes, geographical areas, education and religion. During Shakespeare's time, breakfast was regarded as a private meal and not many indulged in it. Ale was customary with every meal since water was regarded as unsafe. The most important meal was the evening meal and 'at Court, only dinner and supper were served' (Sim, 1997:86).

Currently dinner can be taken at any time of the afternoon or evening and usually denotes the main meal of the day; sometimes it is at lunchtime and sometimes at suppertime. Supper is usually an evening meal. In Medieval England dinner was taken at daylight. In fact, most events were conducted during daylight for practical purposes and to avoid the dark. It has to be remembered that candles were the most common source of light then. Thus noblemen, merchants and peasants had dinner around noon and it was the main meal while supper was eaten at sundown. It is only with industrialization that dinner was taken later and people began to really enjoy evening diversions.

The Swahili divide their meals into three, *Chemsha kinywa* or *Kifungua Mdomo* which is breakfast, consumed upon rising; *chakula cha mchana*, which is lunch eaten in the afternoon and *chakula cha jioni* which is dinner, enjoyed in the evening. People belonging into the higher social classes also have *chai ya jioni*, afternoon tea. *Chai* is also the common name for supper or evening meal on the isles. This is because the tendency on the isles is to have tea and any form of bread as the evening meal. Nyerere used the modern interpretation of dinner and supper, translating both as evening meals.

SL: Gratiano: But we will visit you at **supper** time (II.2.194).

TL: Gratiano: *walakini tutakuja saa za **kula za jioni*** (II.2.262).

SL: Duke of Venice: Sir, I entreat you home with me to **dinner** (IV.1.399).

TL: Sultani: *Bwana, karibu nyumbani kwa **chakula cha jioni*** (IV.1.422).

Another good example of loss in translation is the seasons. The Western reader would automatically link April to spring, a time of re-birth, love and rejuvenation where beauty returns to mother earth. But it is unfortunate that this is not the case for the Swahili who would not appreciate the phrase '*na siku ya Aprili haijapendeza hivyo*' (II, 9, 703) simply because the beauty conjured in the month of

April in Europe is not reflected in the lands of the Swahili. Thus this particular cultural peculiarity would go unnoticed by the Swahili.

5.10.1 Mythical Characters

One of the stumbling blocks that the translator must have found difficulty in, is translating phenomenon embedded in Western cultures such as Greek mythology. The beliefs of ancient Greeks such as those linked to cosmology for instance, have been part of life in the West for centuries. Similarly, people in the West have been enlightened about the myths of powerful Olympian gods for centuries and this became part of their outlook; Shakespeare's audience would have had no problem to understand what the Swahili audience would probably be completely oblivious to. In his Introduction to *Tufani* (1969), the Swahili translation of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Mushi (1969:V) warns that:

Kuna sehemu chache ambazo hazikua rahisi kutafsiri, kwa sababu ilikua vigumu kupata tafsiri halisi za maneno na majina Fulani Fulani, hasa sehemu zile za majina ya miungu ya Kiyunani, zenye imani za ushirikina, na zile zenye mambo yahasuyo safari za baharini.

Gloss: There are a few parts that were not easy to translate, because it was difficult to get the direct equivalence of words and certain names, specifically the sections that include names of Greek gods, with their belief system (witchcraft) and those that concern sea voyages.

Historically, the African in mainland Tanzania did not have a similar relationship with their surroundings nor did they try to understand the different forces of nature in the same way as peoples on the islands, let alone the Greeks and Romans. Greeks had gods and goddesses such as Athena and Poseidon. The Romans had Jupiter and Mars among many others. East Africans had spirits who were essentially their ancestors. They practiced ancestral cults, spirits of the dead, *mizimu* who lived in *mzimuni*. There was always a link between the living and the dead. The living always attempted to appease the dead ancestors so they may have good harvests,

good rains and so on. When it came to medicine, the African communicated with the dead. Normally the ancestor would appear in dreams, and they would lead them to the roots that cure given diseases. On the coast, the spirits were largely *pepo*, jinni and demons.

Faced with ancient European mythological concepts, Nyerere uses different strategies. The first strategy that he uses is that of explaining the concepts in question. For example:

SL: Jessica: For if he could, **Cupid** himself would **blush** (II.6.96).

TL: *Jessika: Maana wangeyaona hata mungu wa mapenzi angefadhaika* (II.6.428).

Since cupid does not exist in Swahili, the translator uses the strategy of explicitation and explains this particular god's function, he therefore translates cupid as 'god of love'. This of course leads to increase detail in Swahili. Also, so as not to offend, the word *mungu* is written in small letters. Similarly the concept of blushing does not exist in the target culture, therefore the translator explains the feeling that one feels and he links this to being embarrassed.

'Explicitation is the technique of making explicit in the target text information that is implicit in the source text' (Klaudy, 2001:80). Similar to most societies, explicitation becomes compulsory where there are major shifts on a cultural basis. According to Tymoczko (1999:27), myths, customs or economic conditions for instance may be presupposed by a text and not explicitly located. The translator then has to include these explicitly; thence one would find that, 'customs, beliefs and myths are frequently explained explicitly in post-colonial literature, much as they must be in translations'. This means therefore that it presents the risk of producing a large amount of material. We find for instance, Nyerere translates 'frowning Mars' as 'god of the brave'. Mars was the Roman god of war. In mythology, he can be

identified with the Greek god Ares. His powers were specifically called upon during battle, for example when the Roman Empire was expanding. Mars was generally a well liked and honoured god. Legend has it that all Romans are his descendants since he was the father of the founder of Rome, Romulus. Nyerere's translating him as 'god of the brave' is not removed from the idea of 'god of war'. Nyerere's translation makes the god's role much more inclusive. The fact that Mars is frowning does not come across in Swahili, this may be because Nyerere wanted to reduce bulkiness. This strategy is employed so as to counter-act loss in translation and is also synonymous to the adaptive trend of expansion, which happens when a translator makes 'explicit information that is implicit in the original, either in the main body or in footnotes or a glossary' (Bastin, 2001:1).

It is also possible that, since some concepts are universal and thus familiar to the Swahili, Nyerere might have preferred to play on them. For instance, the role of 'cupid' is represented differently and in varying forms in various cultures. For example, along the coast there is a jinni – *pepo*, called *Kibuki* who are believed to be a group of spirits who, when possessed by a woman, render her irresistible to men.³² Others yet believe in seeing a shaman or medicine man, *mganga*, to get potions prescribed by the spirits. The *kibuki*, *mganga* and *pepo* engage in some of the roles of gods of love. Thus, faced with such a universal concept, Nyerere sought to explicate and let the audience make their own references. The same applies to Mars; historically, the brave had sought the powers of various forces to help them in battles. For instance, before the First World War in Tanganyika, Germans used to force people to work in cotton plantations. Chiefs were forced to provide labour to the settlers in the southern parts of Tanganyika, then called Deutsche Ostafrika. The peasants could not cultivate for themselves. Kinjeketile, *mganga*, a shaman, from the

³² See chapter four for a discussion on the spirits.

Matumbi tribe who lived near the Rufiji river is said to have consulted the spirit *Hongo* who lived in the water.³³ Legend has it that Kinjeketile remained immersed in the water for three consecutive days and then resurfaced completely dry. After this feat, he informed his people that *Hongo* had told him of a spiritual water which, when drunk turned bullets into water. But there were conditions to be observed which included the order that the brave should not take grains nor force themselves on the women.³⁴ This developed into the Maji maji war of resistance, fought between 1905-07.³⁵ Since belief in the spirit was widespread, other tribes such as the Luguru, who believed in *Kolelo*, the spirit of the water, joined the battle. Within a short time the movement became very powerful. Unfortunately the Maji maji resistance failed miserably and it is believed that this was so because the conditions set by the gods were not respected. These water spirits and gods can be compared to Poseidon, the Greek god of the water and seas. It is obvious that by using this strategy of explication, Nyerere's translation becomes all inclusive making room for the audience to make their own references, rather than being limited to particular foreign gods, gods that they could not even begin to conceptualize.

It needs to be noted however that Nyerere did not use the strategy of explication extensively and seems to have preferred to make foreign terms sound Swahili. I will refer to that strategy as 'swahilization'. This is a kind of domestication. In this instance the translator does not try to explain the concepts in question. Let us consider the example below:

SL: Bassanio: The beards of **Hercules** and **frowning Mars** (III.2.85).

³³ See Ebrahim Hussein (1970).

³⁴ Incidentally, when the Communist Party of China between 1921 and 1949 were fighting the Kuomintang and the Japanese, Mao Tse Tung, as the leader of the party, demanded the same conditions from the Red Army (see Snow, Edgar, *Red Star over China: The Classic Account of the Birth of Chinese Communism*, New York: Grove, 1968).

³⁵ According to Ali Mazrui and Alamin Mazrui, the resistance played a positive role in the spread of Swahili. It was a trans-ethnic medium of communication and the German linguistic policy favoured the spread of Swahili (1995:37).

TL: *Basanio: Madevu ya **Herikule** na **Mungu wa mashujaa*** (III.2.222).

The translator here ‘Swahilizes’ the term ‘Hercules’ to sound Swahili by translating it as *Herikule*. The positive aspect of this strategy is that it is a tool towards language growth and development.

In his first translation, *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969), Nyerere swahilized most of these mythological concepts. Thus the translation includes words such as *Olimpio*, the seat of Greek gods, *Puluto*, which means ‘Pluto’, the Roman god of wealth, *Ate*, the goddess of folly and delusion. Included is also the allusion to Romans chasing *Tarikwini* (II.1.55), who is actually the Roman King ‘Tarquin’. Nyerere does not offer any explanation as to who these characters/ gods are.

In *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969), Cupid could have been translated as ‘*kupidi*’ as were Hercules and Lichas in the following example:

TT: *Moroko: **Herikule** na **Lichasi** wangeliicheza kamari
Kujua yupi ni bora, yawezekana mnyonge
Kwa bahati tu nasibu angejaliwa kushinda
Ndiyo ma’na **Alikide** kushindwa na boi wake (II:1:35-38).*

Or as he did ‘Troilus, Troi, Kiressida’ in the following examples:

SL: Lorenzo: ...in such a night
Troilus me thinks mounted the **Troyan** walls
And sigh’d his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where **Cressid** lay that night (V.1.2-5).

TL: Lorenzo: *Ni usiku kama huu, nadhani **Troilusi**
Alipanda kuta zile zilizoingia **Troi**
Na mayowe kuhemea mahema ya Magiriki
Ambako usiku ule **Kiressida** alilala (V.1.4-7).*

The same applies to ‘*Thisibe*’ (Thisbe), ‘*Dido*’ (Dido), ‘*Karthago*’ (Carthage), ‘*Medea*’ (Medea) and ‘*Aesoni*’ (Aeson). One of the main reasons that led to the prevalence of this strategy is the matter of style that has been previously discussed in this chapter. *Kupidi* is only made of three syllables where as *mungu wa mapenzi* has six syllables. Consider another example:

ST: Salarino: O' ten time faster **Venus** Pigeon's fly (II.6.5).

TT: *Salarino: O tetere wa **Zuhura** hwenda kasi mara kumi* (II.6.394).

Venus is the Roman goddess of love; it is also the brightest planet in the solar system. In this strong imagery of love, Shakespeare refers to the romantic goddess. In Swahili *Zuhura* is not linked to any concept of love but rather to the planet, it is also a common coastal Swahili name for females. Unfortunately the target text does not evoke images of a goddess of love's pigeons flying off to seal new love but rather of a coastal, probably Muslim girl whose pigeons fly quickly; or the planet having pigeons that fly off quickly.

Nyerere rendered 'Venus' as '*Zuhura*' to avoid confusion since in the same scene Jessica talks about 'cupid' whom Nyerere translates as 'god of love'. Swahili is a gender free language, thus both god and goddess are *miungu*. It is unfortunate that, despite Nyerere's usage of the equivalence of Venus, the term does not carry the same meaning as it does in the West. He could have Swahilized Venus into *Vinasi* but this would have failed to address the fact that Romans assigned names of important gods and goddesses to the planets that were then known. There is no Swahili planet called *Vinasi*, the equivalent of the planet is *Zuhura*. His translation may be the result of his quest for language growth; he probably hoped that in due course, the term '*Zuhura*' would come to inculcate both the astrology and mythology as it does in the source culture.

As previously noted, faced with foreign concepts, Nyerere preferred to Swahilize them although at times he used the strategy of explicitation. We find that, for instance, he translated Alcides (an alternative name for Hercules) as *Alikide*. Legend has it that Lichas was Hercules' servant who brought the poisoned shirt from Deianira to Hercules, killing him. Hercules is probably one of the most popular of Greek heroes; he was considered the perfect athlete, he is celebrated in stories,

sculptures, paintings, and even in the geography of the ancient world. For this reason, Nyerere may have thought that it was important to know who he was and thus Swahilized his name, giving him a place in Swahili. Unlike the gods, whose roles exist in the Swahili culture, as individuals, Hercules, Dodi, Alcides and Trolus have played specific roles in the ancient world and it was important for Nyerere to keep them as such - foreign.

On the other hand, we find that in the Introduction to his translation of *Mfalme Edipode* (1971), Mushi points out that, '*mfasiri hushawishika na ama kupiga chuku na kuikoleza mno maana aliyokusudia mtungaji...*' (1971:ix) which means 'a translator is often tempted to either add a pinch of salt or add to the writer's intended meaning'. It is this 'adding' that led Mushi (1971) to dedicate two pages of his translation to explaining to the Swahili the different Greek gods and other mythological concepts, their roles and their given spellings in English. He explains to the Swahili audience that he has employed Swahili oriented spellings for the characters and offers them '*maelezo mafupi juu yake ili msomaji aweze kufahamu yalikotoka*' (ibid, xii) which is 'a brief explanation on these so that the reader may understand their origin'.

Another reason that may have tempted Nyerere to employ Swahilization as opposed to explicitation is the fact that, explicitation tends to become a norm where there is a great distance between the target and the culture of the source text since the information that is 'present only implicitly in the source language...can be derived from the context or the situation' (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958: 8). One of the effects of this norm is that the work would read like a translation rather than give the impression of being the original. Thus, the translator would not be 'invisible.'³⁶

³⁶ See Venuti (1995).

Although this may be an ideal that is sought after in some circles, in the Swahili polysystem, as it has previously been noted, one of the biggest praise a translator can receive is to be informed that his work is perfect, it reads like an original rather than a translation. It is therefore possible that this much sought after praise was important to Nyerere.

5.10.2 Peerage

Personal titles or peerage are often culture specific. The British have the following peerage ranks: Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscount and Baron. These do not exist in the Swahili culture. Consider the following examples:

SL: Nerissa: What say you then to **Falconbridge**, the young **baron of England**?
(I.2.54-55).

TL: *Nerissa: wasemaje basi juu ya **Falikani kivuko**, yule kijana **kabaila wa kiingereza**?* (I.2. 258).

From this example, it needs to be pointed out that, in English society, a baron is a nobleman. Although he is of the lowest rank, nevertheless he is referred to using the title 'Lord'. Historically barons had estates and tenants tended to occupy these vast lands. A baron was therefore a feudal master whose position was recognized by the monarchy.

In the Swahili translation, Nyerere renders 'baron' as '*kabaila wa kiingereza*' which translates as 'an English feudal master'. The term *kabaila* in Swahili is loaded with negative connotations that are linked to colonialism and exploitation. During the *Ujamaa* period, Tanzanian children were inculcated with negative ideals about *ukabaila* and *ubeberu*. The latter term means 'imperialism', and they differentiated these with *wanyonge*, who are 'the exploited'. This was all part of Nyerere's

propaganda machinery towards *Ujamaa*. Nyerere excludes the baron's link with nobility; instead he attaches to him negative, ideologically loaded political ideals.

In the same breath, the name, Falconbridge is literally translated as *Falikani Kivuko*. *Kivuko* means 'a crossing' or 'a small bridge' whereas *Falikani* is the swahilization of the falcon, commonly referred to as *kozi* in Swahili. At this stage, we can see that the name sounds absurd in Swahili. In Nyerere's defence, it is possible that he wanted to convey some character in the name. Sometimes, meaningful names that present a special problem are translated with the aim of conveying 'their characterization properties' (Friedman, 2004:108) and making their 'thematic import accessible' (ibid, 120). It is therefore possible that Nyerere wanted to link the Baron with a tangible object in his lands. This might have been Shakespeare's intention; after all, a 'falcon' is a bird of prey, linked with strength and nobility; a bird that the nobility probably enjoy to hunt. And 'bridges' are to be found on the grounds that belong to the nobility, they are markers of prestige. Nyerere's name choice in this instance might have been spurred by his personal and national ideal which means that his translation stance can be interpreted as a site of resistance in itself.

Let us consider another example:

SL: Nerissa: ...**Marquis** of **Monteferrat** (I:2:113).

TL: *Nerissa: ...Mwinyi Mkuu wa Montiferrati* (I:2:304).

In this example, Nyerere translates 'Marquis' as *Mwinyi Mkuu*. A marquis is a nobleman whose rank is hereditary. The title exists in various European monarchies and also some empires such as the Chinese and Japanese. In the British society the marquis ranks below the Duke. *Mwinyi Mkuu* can be translated as 'great chieftain'; he is the traditional ruler of Zanzibar and historically his descendants claimed descent from the Shah of Persia. Monteferrat is translated as *Montiferrati*. This follows the usual trend in Swahili language where names of foreign places are normally

preserved but rendered in Swahili phonemes, Swahilized. This is normally the case for those areas that were not already familiar to the Swahili. The areas that were familiar, for instance the ‘Comoros’, have their Swahili equivalents, in this instance it is *Ngazija*.

Let us consider another example:

SL: Nerissa: How like you the young German, the **Duke** of Saxony’s nephew?
(I.2.69).

TL: *Nerissa: na kijana Jerumani wampendaje, yule mpwa wa **Sultani** wa Saksoni?* (I.2.275).

In this case, the translator does not try to explicate but translates the title ‘Duke’ as ‘Sultan’. A Sultan is actually a King.

We can here see that faced with concepts that did not exist in the target culture Nyerere had great difficulties. There are no equivalents for the peerage and the translator had to fit the given titles as he understood them. To some, he made them as Swahili as he could and to others, he masked them with ideological perspectives.

5.10.3 Racial Prejudice

Read in modern times, the question of anti-Semitism in the play is central. Shylock is a stereotypical caricature of a money-obsessed medieval Jew. According to Shapiro (1996), English society in the Elizabethan era did not regard Jews positively; they labelled them evil, deceptive and greedy and forced them to wear certain attires that would identify them. In regards to this play, various interpretations have been undertaken by various scholars about this issue. Some critics have labelled this play anti-Semitic due to the portrayal of Shylock. But generally, it is interpreted as merely a play about anti-Semitism. Shakespeare may have aimed at exposing the attitude of the Elizabethans but simply used a foreign setting to make the reading comfortable.

Nevertheless, this should not be interpreted as Shakespeare's own views and intentions, or those of Nyerere as the translator who has brought this work across to the Swahili. It is most probable that, one of the many reasons that attracted Nyerere to this play is the representation of the surface attractiveness of money and wealth as represented by Shylock and its similarity to the Indian in Tanzania vis-à-vis the Christian qualities of mercy and compassion. As a writer, Shakespeare was most probably just holding a mirror to his society.

Nyerere's ideological outlook plays a central role in his translation. He had a Fabian perspective that allowed him to understand that society should not be made to judge the Jew or the Indian in general in terms of their ethnicity but rather through their individual economic relationships vis-à-vis the society. Both Jews and Indians happened to occupy an intermediary position through which they appropriated wealth and in the process were perceived to have deprived the society at large. This was not the case of the whole ethnic groups but rather individuals in the given communities.

We find that, throughout the Swahili translation, the term 'Jew' is translated as *Yahudi*. It can be argued that since 'Jew' is a noun, it therefore belongs to the first group in the Swahili noun classification and it would have been grammatically sound to translate this term as *Myahudi*. In accordance with this classification the term 'Christian' is translated as *Mkristo*. Nyerere only translates 'Jew' as *Myahudi* when the conversation is extremely degrading towards the Jew.

For example:

SL: Solanio: The villain **Jew** with outcries rais'd the duke (II:8:4).

TL: *Solanio: Kisirani **Myahudi** 'limwamsha Sultani' (II:8:550).*

SL: Salanio: As the **dog Jew** did utter in the streets (II:8:14).

'my daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!

TL: *Salanio: Huyu **mbwa Myahudi** kalia barabarani (II:8:561).*

Binti yangu! O dukati zangu! O binti yangu!

In the Swahili culture the term *Yahudi* is actually derogative and loaded with historical references that date back to the introduction of Islam and later on, the spread of Christianity. This is simply because both religions' perception of the Jews are not positive. Nyerere refers to 'the Jew' in a more polite and acceptable term, *Myahudi*, when the character is being marginalized. There are two reasons for this. The first one is that he needed to add the prefix 'm' so as to have the 16 syllables that he needs for the verse or be complete and also, it is possible that somehow, Nyerere did not wish to add insult to injury.

The translation of different races also brings to the fore the fact that a translator, just like an author, is not simply an individual but a socially and historically constituted subject. Therefore, we find that Nyerere translates terminologies that have historical links to Tanzania using some historically loaded terminologies,

For example:

SL: Nerissa: How like you the young **German**, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?
(I.2.69).

TL: *Nerissa: na kijana **Jerumani** wampendaje, yule mpwa wa Sultani wa Saksoni?* (I.2.275).

The term 'German' is translated as *Jerumani*, a harsh and historically and politically loaded equivalent. The literal equivalent of 'German' would have been *Mjerumani*. This is because 'German' refers to a person and it therefore belongs to the first noun class where all words begin with the prefix 'M'. Germans colonized Tanganyika from 1880 to 1918, the end of the First World War. But in 1905 people rose in resisting the German domination during the *majimaji* resistance in which around 200 000 people

of the 4 million population died.³⁷ The Germans were regarded as strong and ruthless and were feared by the local population who also referred to them as *udongo mwekundu* (red soil) or *Mdachi* or *Jerumani*. The latter is a term that inculcates awe at their strength but also an aspect of abhorrence. To date this term is still used domestically to refer to a person with a strong and ruthless personality.

Here is another example:

SL: Lorenzo: And sigh'd his soul toward the **Grecian** tents (V.1.5).

TL: Lorenzo: *Na mayowe kuhemea mahema ya **Magiriki*** (V.1.6).

Nyerere translates Grecian which means Greek as *Magiriki*. In Swahili, a Greek is *Mgiriki* while its plural is *Wagiriki*. Terms such as *Giriki* or *Magiriki* are derogative. One adds *Ma* to certain nouns to stress the quantity in an exaggerated manner. For instance '*mapesa*' means a whole lot of money. Adding the prefix to a proper noun renders the word negative. For example, if one intends to be derogative and prejudiced about items such as 'chairs' or 'food', then one could say, *Maviti* or *Machakula*.

Nyerere may have translated the term 'Greek' the way he did because of the history of the Greeks in Tanzania. Most Greeks immigrated to East Africa after the great depression and many of them settled in the interior of the country where they had huge plantations; they were the sole exporters of sisal. People link extreme wealth to the Greeks, there is a saying, '*tajiri kama giriki*', meaning, 'as wealthy as a Greek'.

Let us consider the strategy used by Nyerere with regards to concepts which are linked with racial colouring. Shakespeare shows another kind of racism through Portia, one of the most admirable leading women in Shakespeare's plays. The wealthy and intelligent heiress who is supposed to bring across the concept of charity

³⁷See Iliffe (1971).

in the play is apprehensive at best before meeting her suitor, the Prince of Morocco, a black Moor. She tells her maid:

Nerissa, 'If he have the condition of **a saint** and **the complexion of a devil**, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me' (I. 2. 129).

This means that she would prefer to have him hear her confession at church rather than wed her. Nyerere translates this as:

TT: ...*kama ana **hali ya malaika** au **sura ya shetani**, ni heri anighofiri makosa kuliko kuniposa* (I, 2, 321-23).

Gloss: ... if he has **the condition of an angel** or the **face of the devil**, better he pardon my sins than engage me.

Malaika and *Shetani* which mean 'the angel' and 'the devil' respectively, are universally regarded as two ends of a stick. Nyerere could have used the literal equivalence of the term 'saint' as *mtakatifu*. He did not and neither did he bring across the fact that Portia was referring to the complexion or colouring of the devil. Nyerere renders this complexion into the persona of the devil; there is no inclusion of his colouring.

Although open for debate, this decision may have been informed by the conscious choice of not rendering phrases that are racially explicit. Nyerere, a devout Christian, may have disagreed with the arguments that portrayed all negative concepts as black. It is also a fact that churches in Tanzania tend to have an ebony carving of Jesus on the cross, portraying him as a dark person.

In Shakespeare's original, the Prince of Morocco is aware of prejudices that exist against his colouring thus upon arrival at Portia's, he declares:

ST: Mislike me not for **my complexion**
The **shadow's livery of the burnish'd sun**
To whom I am neighbour and near bred (II. 1. 1-3).

Nyerere translates this as:

TT: *Usikose kunipenda kwa **sura yangu nyeusi**
Niliyovishwa na joto la jirani yangu, jua* (II.1.1-2).

Gloss: do not fail to love me due to **my black face**
Covered on me by the heat of my neighbour, the sun.

The prince then declares that he wants Portia's love as much as the 'fairest creatures northward born'. In what can be seen as hypocrisy, Portia refers to the fact that his blackness is of no importance and goes even further in implying that the prince's complexion is 'fair' like that of other suitors,

ST: Yourself, renowned prince, then stood **as fair**
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection' (II. 1. 20-22).

TT: *Wewe, mtukufu Mwana wa Mfalme, ungekuwa
Na **uwezo ule ule** wa kupata pendo langu
Kama mgeni ye yote niliyekwisha kumwona* (II.1.22-24).

Gloss: Your Majesty the Prince, you would have
The **same capability** of getting my love
As would any visitor that I have met.

In Shakespeare's day, the word 'fair' had initially meant 'beautiful' and also 'blond' and 'fair-skinned'. It was used to refer to the aristocracy or upper-class as the implications were that they did not need to work out of doors and expose their skins to wind and sun as did the lower classes who were dark and tanned.³⁸ Despite Shakespeare's reference to the fairness of the Prince's skin as portrayed by Portia who pretends that the Prince has a fair complexion, Nyerere draws attention to his 'capabilities'. He translates 'fair' as 'of similar chance'. Nyerere does make it obvious that the Prince is dark, he actually translates him as black, but he does not dwell on his complexion. Thus, when the Prince chooses the wrong casket Portia rejoices and says:

ST: A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains: go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so' (2. 7. 78-79).

³⁸ See Mowat and Werstine (2004).

TT : *Ni kuvuja kwa pakacha. Vuta pazia. Nendeni. Wote wamfananao, wachague vivyo hivyo* (2.7.544-5).

Gloss: it is the leaking of the palm leaf basket. Draw the curtains. You all go. **Let all who resemble him** make the same choice.

Because of Nyerere's word choices in regards to the Prince's complexion, specifically his rendering of the term 'fair' as 'capability', what comes across in Swahili is that, 'let all people who have similar capabilities to him make the same casket choice', as opposed to 'those of similar colouring'. The only time that the Swahili translation draws attention to the colour of the prince is when he says that he hopes that Portia will not discard him simply because he is black. At all other times, Nyerere does not make the racism explicit; he does not translate the term 'complexion'. Nyerere's treatment of the passages concerning the Prince of Morocco is racially neutral. The character happens to be black, but first and foremost, he is a suitor. This neutrality is seen in the following passage,

Lorenzo: I shall answer that better to the commonwealth than you can **the getting up of the negro's belly: the Moor is with child by you**, Launcelot.
Launcelot: It is much that the Moor should be more than reason: but if she be less than an honest woman, she is indeed more than I took her for.

Lorenzo: How every fool can play upon the word! (III:5.41).

Nyerere omits the whole passage about the negro's belly. Omission is 'the elimination or reduction of part of the text' (Bastin, 2001:7). It is an operational norm that was widely applied to whole segments in Swahili translations during the colonial epoch where translations such as *Alfu lela ulela* (1929) and *Safari za Gulliver* (1932) had entire tales and adventures omitted. At the same time, it needs to be noted that omission has also been quite widespread in the post-colonial era. In all his translations Mushi justifies his translation strategies by warning the reader that his intention is not faithfulness but rather the reproduction of Shakespeare's message. He makes ample use of the strategy of omission in his translation of *Makbeth* (1968), and he explains that, the play, as written by Shakespeare, is not understood by many, that

is why he decided to simplify and omit some sections from it ‘...*alivyouandika Shakespeare, haueleweki kwa watu wengi. Lakini sina shaka wengi wataelewa tafsiri yangu*’ (Mushi, 1968: V).

Nyerere’s omission differs from the colonial era as it seems to be much more specific. He omits what he sees as unacceptable. This is seen in the above example which is overtly racist, especially as regards the phrase ‘negro belly’. The direct interpretation of Nyerere’s strategy is that he was resisting against a kind of stereotyping of black people, often portrayed as inferior. Translation here takes up the role of being a space or area of resistance.

Nyerere did not stand for discrimination, and as a translator he has purposely interpreted the above with the backdrop of his ideology. In October 1960, a few months before Tanganyika became independent, he fought against strong sentiments in the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), that citizenship should be available only for black Africans. His speech at the National Assembly reads:

Discrimination against people because of their colour is exactly what we have been fighting against. This is what we formed TANU for, and so soon, sir, ... some of my friends ... are preaching discrimination as a religion to us. And they stand like Hitlers and begin to glorify the race. We glorify human beings, sir, not colour (Nyerere, 1966:77).

Nyerere believed in human rights, ‘Our struggle has been, still is, and always will be a struggle for human rights. ... Our position is based on the belief in the equality of human beings, in their rights and their duties as citizens’ (ibid).

5.11 Summary

It is important to point out that in the post-colonial period translation theory has disengaged from its Euro-centric focus. Translation has played a vital role in shaping the Swahili society and in informing the polysystem. In fact translation has penetrated the social, political and cultural complexities of Swahili life. The relationship

between translations and Swahili as a language has played an important role in asserting the status of Swahili as a challenge to English, the language of the colonizer. Swahili translations have given form to textual discourses that initially may have been concerned with literary politics but as a consequence have also influenced the society as a whole.

At this point, we begin to see that the trends that are prevalent in Swahili translations are the result of what has been *assigned* importance rather than accidents of nature.³⁹ Those involved in this process are discussed at length by Lefevere who points out that there are powers which include people and institutions that can hinder a translation or develop it (Lefevere, 1992:15). One such a person is the following critic who assigns a value judgement to the translation of *Juliasi Kaizari* (1969). He writes:

Ama kweli Mwalimu Nyerere alifanya kazi yake kwa makini hivi kwamba huwezi kujua kama tamthilia hii ni tafsiri ya tamthiliya ya kiingereza iliyokusudiwa Waingereza’ (Syambo, 1985:21).

To be just, Mwalimu Nyerere did his job so thoroughly that one can not discern that this drama is a translation from English meant for the English people.

Syambo (1985) then goes on to discuss that it is only a few sections that make one realize that Bruto and Portia are not Africans. This statement is very telling of what is considered ‘the norm’ in Swahili translations. The more a work reads like a Swahili work, the more it is familiar, the more it is accepted into the polysystem.

Although translations undertaken during the post-colonial era somewhat differed in content from those that preceded them, it is debatable as to whether most of them can be understood as ‘faithful translations.’ Faithful translations that fit into some narrowly defined norms and regarded as acceptable and natural in the West are not evident in Swahili. The Swahili translator seems to have been concerned with the

³⁹ See Toury, 1995:12.

Swahili lingo-cultural milieu rather than mechanical language oriented equivalence. Acceptability in Swahili translations is built around the concept of adaptation between two cultures. Translators choose to either adapt the text to the reader or adapt the reader to the text.

I believe that Swahili translations have employed both local and global adaptation strategies. According to Bastin (2001), local adaptation is brought about by problems from the source language such as absence of lexical equivalents and inexistence of a source context in the target culture. Global adaptation 'constitutes a general strategy which aims to reconstruct the purpose, function or impact of the original text' (Bastin, 2001:7). Local adaptations have been the result of shifts between the source texts and Swahili culture. For the Swahili for example, idealized beauty is not a blonde blue eyed siren such as Portia and as such, there is no equivalence for the word 'blonde'. It is precisely for this reason that Nyerere chose to compare Portia's hair to 'gold', *dhahabu*. Due to the great Oriental influence along the coast, the Swahili have become familiar with golden jewellery worn by women. Precisely through this changed concept, they were able to associate and appreciate the given beauty. On the other hand, global adaptations are largely the result of demands and choices from patrons, publishers and the like who influence translators based on their availability and reasons for translating.

As a final word, I would add that, in a very telling paper that was written in the early 1990s, Walter Bgoya, then General Manager for Tanzania Publishing House, praises the role of the given parastatal which had the monopoly of publishing in Tanzania. He writes:

TPH's guiding policy is that of publishing for the people – publishing books that are of immediate benefit to them as well as works of literature with roots in our culture- (Bgoya, 1993:37).

The above mentioned quote is in accordance with translation choices in Tanzania where it seems that acculturation is an issue that is very much contended upon.

Nyerere's choice in translating Shakespeare is quite multi faceted. One might have thought that, as a politician who advocated Pan-Africanism and Tanzanian nationhood, Nyerere could have been among those who 'maintain that translation into European languages should be restricted, even curtailed, that texts should not be translated into dominant linguistic and cultural systems because this perpetuates the colonizing process' (Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999:05). But instead, we find that he was generally perceived to 'have a streak of self-righteousness and intellectual arrogance which often made him ignore the advice of his political colleagues and or contemptuously dismiss the opinion of local intellectuals as opposed to his expatriate friends whom he coveted' (Shivji, 2008:145). His intellectual arrogance, a reflection of Nyerere's colonial socialization, made him praise a certain John Allen for informing those who were ignorant about Swahili but had nevertheless judged the language as inadequate to express great ideas without extensive borrowing from foreign languages - ...*napenda kumshukuru hasa kwa kuwajibu watu wasiojua Kiswahili, ambao wanafikiri kuwa Kiswahili si lugha pana ya kutosha kueleza mawazo makubwa au ufasaha safi bila kuazima mno maneno mapya ya kigeni* (Nyerere, 1969:vii).

Nyerere's choice of a canon from his colonizer's polysystem was therefore purposely executed. He made translation decisions that were largely informed by the Swahili perspectives. In this light, we can argue that his translation, like many others that were translated during the post-colonial period have proven to be 'strategic cultural intervention pitched against the hegemonic English-language nations and the unequal cultural exchanges in which they engage their global others' (Venuti, 1995:309). In addition to that, through his translation Nyerere sought to bring across his ideological aspirations and beliefs as well as a clear-cut personal ambition that proved his worth as a man of knowledge.

It cannot be argued that Nyerere's translation has been completely absorbed by the Swahili to the point where it is seen as part and parcel of Swahili literature. It informs and defines Swahili literature. It is a work that carries with it its translators' experiences and beliefs which have played an important role in defining the Tanzanian Swahili post-colonial identity and in the same breath, inevitably, that of the final product. The translator's aim may have been faithfulness; I believe that this is faithfulness not only to the original text but to himself as a person and also to his audience. This translation is loaded with both Nyerere's personal ideological outlook as well as that which he interpreted as that of his people, his audience.

Thus it has been used 'to describe how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture. While subjugated peoples cannot readily control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do determine to varying extents what they absorb into their own, and what they use it for' (Pratt, 1992:6). Although Nyerere has been guided by fidelity to the original, it seems that this fidelity has been largely a principle guideline; foremost in importance to him has been the Swahili socio-cultural universe and their reception of this work.

6. CHAPTER SIX

Modern Swahili Translations: Translation of *The Search* and Children's Literature

6.1 Translation of Naguib Mahfouz's *The Search* into the Swahili *Msako*

Msako (2004) is the translation of the Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz's Arabic novel *Al-Tariq* (1964). Naguib was the first Arab to win the Nobel Prize for literature. In what is revealing itself to be a Swahili trend, the Swahili translator, Deogratias Simba used the English translation, *The Search* (1991), translated by Mohamed Islam and edited by Magdi Wahba as his source text. Translating from English texts as opposed to source texts that may be in languages that are accessible to the Swahili can be traced back to the colonial period where we find for instance, in the 1940s, the renowned Swahili author, Shaaban Robert, translated some of Voltaire's stanzas from English. He also translated Omar Khayyam via the English translation by Edward Fitzgerald. Shaaban Robert was fluent in Arabic, nevertheless, he chose to translate from English. Similarly, as previously discussed, canonical works such as *The Nights*, discussed in chapter four, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, Okot P'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* and Ferdinand Oyono's *Une Vie de boy*, have all been translated from languages other than their source texts. In his discussion on indirect translation, Toury (1995) points out that, historically oriented cultural studies cannot afford to ignore this phenomenon. Its importance lies not in itself but 'as a juncture where systemic relationships and historically determined norms intersect and correlate' (Toury, 1995:130). Understanding what seems to be a trend of indirect translations in Swahili will lead to the establishing of norms of Swahili translations.

It can be established that, in Tanzania, most indirect translations are undertaken from English. The source texts may be Arabic, French or Kikuyu, but it is

the English translations that are used as source texts for the Swahili translation. Such choices are not always beneficial to Swahili. We find for instance, some of the criticisms that have been thrown at Ngugi's English translations are that, they are not decolonizing. For instance, according to Gyasi (2006)¹, the translation of *Matigari Ma Mjiruungi* (1989), suppresses a number of uniquely Kikuyu aspects that give the work power and identity. These aspects are those of proverbs and sayings. The result of this is that the translation reads as though it was originally written in English, defeating Ngugi's intention of 'restoring the primacy of the African language as the mediator of African experience' (Gyasi, 2006:25), and making the Kikuyu text the great original work. The African experience being discussed here would most probably mirror or rather be much more accessible to the Swahili than would the experience portrayed in the English text. When translating this work, Wangui Wa Goro's target audience was the globalized English speaking audience. She was addressing an international audience whereas the Kikuyu original was targeted at the Gikuyu, an East African tribe that have more in common with the Swahili than the universal audience for whom the English translation was addressed. In this light, one may argue that, had source texts been used for Swahili translations, the overall experience would have been different. The shifts that the indirect translator encountered would have been easily surpassed.

This state of affairs may be due to the role that English has played in the Swahili society and specifically in Tanzania where, historically, Tanganyika and Zanzibar, the countries that formed the United Republic of Tanzania, were part of the great British Empire, playing an active role towards 'the sun never setting on it'. Swahili translators can therefore access English translation texts very easily, especially since English carries with it hegemonic connotations.

¹ Also Gikandi (1991),

The source text for the current Swahili translation, *Al-Tariq* (1964), is a novel that offers a harsh criticism of the Post Egyptian revolution morality. El Enany (1993) cites the author saying that, he used to see the demonstrations of the 1919 revolution from a small room on the roof of his home. He saw women take part in the demonstrations on donkey-drawn carts and English soldiers firing at demonstrators. The revolution had a strong effect on Mahfouz. His mother would pull him back from the window but, curious, he wanted to see everything. It is through this experience that Mahfouz developed strong patriotism. Later on however, he became disillusioned with the Revolution and voiced his criticisms strongly in some of his writings. One of them is the current novel in which, the concept of searching is a metaphor of aborted dreams.² Saber, the protagonist's search for freedom, dignity and security can be interpreted as the aspiration of many. This also has a metaphysical context where it can be the search of meaning, of God.

6.2 Synopsis of the Novel

The story begins with the protagonist, Saber Sayed, just returned home from his mother's funeral. The latter had been a prostitute who had raised Saber for a better life; she did not want her son to live the life that she had led. Unfortunately, she had gotten imprisoned and had her money confiscated. Saber reminisces about their last conversation where she revealed to him that she had abandoned her husband, his father, before giving birth to him. The latter is supposed to be a man of means living in Cairo. With her death, Saber has two options, he can either become a ruffian, a hustler or a pimp or search for this father whom he believes to be still alive and well off. Thence, armed with his parents wedding certificate, their wedding photo taken thirty years previously, and some money from his mother's business, Saber decides to

² For an in-depth literary analysis see El Enany (1993).

leave Alexandria and head for Cairo to search for him. Once in Cairo Saber checks into a hotel, attracted by a woman whom we later learn to be Karima, sitting by the front; she reminds him of a girl that he had known in Alexandria, one who smelt of the salty sea. Then he goes about placing a classified in the local paper, announcing his search. Soon enough he becomes involved with Karima, the young wife of the hotel owner, Mr. Khalil. They have nocturnal adventurous sexual encounters. From the newspaper offices, Saber meets Elham to whom he admits that he is actually looking for his father. He is torn between the two women: Elham, a portrait of 'clear, cloudless skies' offers him friendship, love and redemption and Karima, a portrait of 'thunder and rain' offers him sexual passion and a descent into hell.

His advert not being successful, no one having any knowledge of his father ever having been in Cairo, and almost penniless, his money running low, he needs to find a solution or else might turn to a life of crime as did his mother. Saber finds himself agreeing to Karima's plot of killing her husband so she can inherit his fortune. The plan is for them to marry and start a new life together. Hence one night, Karima lets Saber into Khalil's room where he kills him. The hotel porter, Aly Seriakos, is arrested for the murder. Karima goes to live with her mother and plays the pained, grieving widow. She does not contact Saber which leads to frustration in the latter. He ponders on his actions and decisions, wondering whether he has been made a fool of. This is ignited by the hotel doorman Mohamed al-Sawi who slyly informs him that Karima had previously married her cousin and has been with him while married to Khalil. The doorman then 'accidentally' let's slip that her mother is located at twenty Sahil Street in Zaitoun.

Unaware that he is being tricked, Saber goes after Karima. Feeling angry that she used him to murder her husband so she may go off with her cousin; he confronts her and she denies everything, telling him that she did not contact him since it would

have seemed suspicious; despite her protests, he strangles her and is arrested for murder. While awaiting a trial that would probably lead to hanging, his attorney, who is also a relative of Elham's, tells him that he knew a man who resembled Saber's father but now does not know where he is. Saber puts everything down to fate and resigns himself to whatever the future holds for him.

6.2 The Author: Naguib Mahfouz

Naguib Mahfouz³ was born on the 11th of December 1911 and died on the 30th of August 2006. He won the 1988 Nobel Prize for Literature. According to El-Enany (1993) Mahfouz was born in the al-Jamaliyya quarter in the heart of the old city of Cairo. His childhood was spent first at al-jamaliyya and then from 1924 at al-Abbasiya; 'there is a sense in which we can say that he never left Jamaliyya' (El Enany, 1993:1). This is because it appears as a setting in many of his writings, an inspiration to his creativity. He was the seventh and last child; he had four brothers and two sisters. His father was a civil servant and his mother worked hard to widen her children's perspectives; for instance she would take him to see monuments and helped him cultivate his love for reading. Naguib Mahfouz grew up in a stable family where religion played an important role.

After completing his secondary education, Mahfouz entered the University of Cairo, then called Fuad I University, and studied philosophy. He was very interested in dualism of 'matter and spirit' (ibid). This is obvious in his later fiction, for instance in *The Search* (1991), where Saber is pulled between two lovers, one representing the body and the other the soul.

He graduated in 1934 and started an MA which he never finished. There is contradiction as to the subject of his MA; he once said that it was the aesthetic theory

³ Biographical information was deducted from:
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1988/mahfouz-bio.html.

and later on said that it was Sufism in Islam (ibid). But by 1936 he had decided to become a professional writer. At the time of his death he had published 34 novels, over 350 short stories, dozens of movie scripts and five plays. Many of his works were adapted into Arabic-language films. His novel known in English as *Children of Gebelawi* (1959), was banned in Egypt in 1959 by Al-Azhar, one of the most important Islamic institutions in the world, and he was accused of blasphemy because it includes characters representing God and the prophets.

Mahfouz worked as a journalist at Ar-Risala and was a contributing editor for the leading newspaper Al-Ahram. Many of his novels were serialized in this paper and his writings also appeared in his weekly column, 'Point of View'. He also worked as a civil servant holding various posts in government departments. Most of Mahfouz's early novels were historical; he wanted to write about the whole history of Egypt in a series of books. However, after the third volume, Mahfouz shifted his interest to the psychological impact of the social changes on ordinary people, bluntly expressing his views. He has written works covering a broad range of topics, including socialism, homosexuality and God, some of the subjects were prohibited in Egypt at the time.

In his writing, he idealizes socialism and delineates Islamic fundamentalism; he had a strong antipathy towards Islamic fundamentalists. He was a controversial figure in the Arab world; therefore it is not surprising that before the Nobel Prize only a few of his novels had appeared in the West. Most of his books were banned in many Arab countries until after he won the Nobel Prize. This was because of his outspoken support for Sadat's Camp David Peace treaty with Israel. According to Pipes (2003:148), Naguib called the Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini a terrorist, prompting the latter to put a fatwa on him. Naguib then joined 80 other Arab

intellectuals in declaring that ‘no blasphemy harms Islam and Muslims so much as the call for murdering a writer’.

According to El Enany (1993), death threats against Mahfouz were many, therefore similar to Rushdie; Mahfouz was given police protection, but in 1994 Islamic extremists almost succeeded in assassinating the then 82-year-old novelist by stabbing him in the neck outside his Cairo home. He survived but remained permanently affected by damage to nerves in his right hand. He could then only write for half an hour each day.

Mahfouz died in Cairo following a head injury as a result of a fall. He was aged 94 and was in the presence of his wife Atiya and his daughters Fatma and Umm Kalthum. He was accorded a state funeral with full military honours but his long time dream of having all the social classes of Egypt, including the very poor, congregate in his funeral procession was not accorded; attendance was tightly restricted by the Egyptian government (www.factofarabs.com).

6.4 Translation and the Swahili Translator

A large number of Naguib Mahfouz’s novels were translated into English and other languages after he won the Nobel. Then, on the 11th of December 2001, the American University in Cairo Press announced the establishment of the Naguib Mahfouz Fund, in support of its expanding publishing programme of Arabic literature in translation (<http://aucpress.com>).⁴ Mahfouz is quoted by the American University in Cairo Press website pointing out that, through the given establishment, ‘contemporary Arabic literature will gain much broader dissemination and recognition throughout the world’ (ibid). Concerning Mahfouz’s translation, the American University in Cairo Press announced on its website that in December 1985, it signed a comprehensive

⁴ http://aucpress.com/t-aboutnm.aspx?template=template_naguibmahfouz.

publishing agreement with Naguib Mahfouz, thus becoming his primary English-language publisher as well as his worldwide agent for all translation rights. The world read Mahfouz through them since, prior to his winning the Nobel, they had published nine of his novels. The first novel to be translated into English was *Miramar* (1978), and the most translated novel is *Midaq Alley* (1966), which has appeared in more than 30 foreign editions in 15 languages. It is no wonder that Mahfouz celebrated the role of translation in his work when he said:

it was through the translation of these novels into English that other publishers became aware of them and requested their translation into other foreign languages, and I believe that these translations were among the foremost reasons for my being awarded the Nobel prize (ibid).

Mahfouz was right. Deogratias Martin Simba,⁵ who translated *Al-Tariq* (1964) into Swahili, did so after reading the English translation almost forty years after the initial Arabic version was published. Simba was born on the 2nd of October 1971 at Mpanda in the Rukwa region of Tanzania. He comes from a lower middle class family where his father is a medical assistant and his mother is a housewife who also cultivates. He is currently working as editor at Mkuki na Nyota Publishers Ltd in Dar es Salaam. He studied Philosophy at the Salvatorian Institute of Philosophy and Theology in Morogoro, Tanzania before joining the Carmelite Fathers institute in Morogoro. He graduated in 1999 with a Higher Diploma in Neuro-Linguistic Programmemeing, a branch of psychology. He then did a short course on editing at the American University in Cairo Press. It is while he was in Cairo from October 2002 to March 2003 that he first came across the works of Mahfouz.

Prior to working as editor, Simba worked as a professional translator in the media; he still does translations for *The African* newspaper in Tanzania and also works as a freelance translator. Simba has written children's books including *Lango*

⁵ Biographical information was collected through my interview with the translator, Dar es Salaam, 8th November 2006.

la ajabu (2002), which he also translated into *The Mystery Door* (2002). In collaboration with Mary Kihampa he wrote *Nora na matunda ya ajabu* (2002), ‘Nora and the Mysterious fruits’ and his recent work is titled *Safari ya kuvumbua mwisho wa dunia* (2004), ‘A journey to discover the end of the world’. He has also written grammar books for schools including *Karibu English for Primary Schools’ STDs I – III*, Pupil’s books and Teacher’s guides. Book III was undertaken in collaboration with Elizabeth Mwandiko. He is currently working on more grammar books for primary and Secondary Schools. Simba gives his reasons for translating *The Search* (1991) as:

*mabadiliko ya kisaikolojia kama yanavyoainishwa katika hadithi hii yalinivuta sana. Ndipo nilipoanza kuitafsiri katika lugha ya Kiswahili nikiwa ninawalenga wasomaji wa lugha ya Kiswahili, hasa vijana na wazazi. Kuna mengi yanashabihiana na yanayotokea katika jamii yetu. Vijana wanaota ndoto kuhusu fedha nyingi, anasa, starehe, mapenzi na mamlaka katika jamii lakini wengi pia hawajitumi katika kufanya kazi na kuwa wabunifu. Kiwango cha uhalifu pia kinaongezeka, maana watu wanataka kupata fedha kwa njia yoyote ile, halali na isiyo halali.*⁶

Gloss: The psychological changes portrayed in this novel attracted me very much. That is why I started translating this into Swahili, aiming at Swahili readers, especially the youth and parents. There are a lot of similarities and a lot that also takes place within our society. The youth dream of money, pleasure, luxury, love and power in society but many of them do not engage themselves in work or in being creative. The level of crime is also increasing, because people want to acquire wealth using any means necessary, legitimate and illegitimate.

Having studied psychology, this work had a special appeal to Simba especially since the psychological changes are portrayed in a manner that would interest Tanzanian youths who are known to have great fondness in thrilling plots. Simba went into this translation armed with extensive background information on the author. He read a large number of the author’s works thus was familiar with the author’s distinct style which he praises. ‘...*mtindo wa utunzi ni mzuri, ambao ni wa pekee sana. Ana namna ya pekee ya kuiainisha na kuichambua jamii ili kuikosoa,*

⁶ From my interview with the translator, Mr Simba, Dar es Salaam, 8th November 2006.

*kukosoa namna ya kufikiri kutoa changamoto kwa walio madarakani kushughulikia matatizo ya msingi ya jamii..*⁷ which translates as, ‘the creative style is good, and unique. He has a distinct way of defining and analyzing the society so as to criticize, he criticizes the way of thinking, giving initiative to those in power so that they may deal with society’s basic problems...’. It seems therefore that the novel’s description of the development of Egypt in the 20th-century combined with intellectual and cultural influences from East and West attracted the translator who believed that the Swahili audience could relate to this.

6.5 The Modern Swahili Society

Over time, the phenomenon that is Swahili translation has evolved as have the Swahili, its audience. This is particularly since, ‘writing strategies...differ considerably depending on the audience’ (Tymoczko, 1999:32). Therefore, before embarking on an analysis and commentary of the current case study in Swahili translation, it is important to understand the current Swahili society and the build up to where it is. Previous chapters have highlighted the historical background to the creation of the current society. In the late 1970’s the economic strains were already visible with the collapse of the state controlled economy. Nyerere in his own words, admitted to his son in law, Ikaweba Bunting (2007:68) that some of the measures that he took were detrimental to the development of the country. In particular, the negative role played by the state bureaucracy which involved itself in embezzlement and corruption so as to satisfy its sumptuous consumption. As its reflection, this state of affairs is portrayed in some of the translations that were undertaken during this time. These were works by African authors whose countries underwent similar experiences to those of Tanzania. The works include Achebe’s *A Man of the People*

⁷ From personal communication with the translator, 8th March 2008

(1968) and *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born* (1969), translated as *Mwakilishi wa Watu* (1977) by Douglas Kavugha and *Wema Hawajazaliwa* (1976) by Abdilatif Abdalla respectively. In the late 1970s, Tanzania engaged itself in a war against Uganda and this had devastating social economic impact on the country. The state coffers were left empty. These devastating events made it impossible for the country to function as an *Ujamaa* state. It could no longer provide free education, free medical care, subsidies, unable to subsidize the staple meal, *sembe*; in the shops, the shelves were left empty, there was no sugar, no salt and all the consumer goods were sold in the black market.⁸ This was the failure that made the masses unable to believe in *Ujamaa* and thence it collapsed. Shivji (1992), discusses this crisis of ideological hegemony in Tanzanian politics.⁹

By the time Ali Hassan Mwinyi took over from Nyerere as president of Tanzania, in 1985, neo-liberal economic policies were introduced in collaboration with IMF (International Monetary Fund). All the state enterprises were now privatized and auctioned to private companies. For the first time since 1967, private capital was allowed to take its role in the economy. Thus, 1985 saw the emergence of a new Swahili society in Tanzania. There was an introduction of Western lifestyle including music, movies, western literature and consumer goods. English slang was married to Swahili and produced *Kiswanglish* among the youth. For the first time people were allowed to have television sets and computers. And this is how Western ideas and concepts became embedded within society. All this brought about social differences evident in the social classes that emerged where some were visibly wealthy while the large majority were marginalized.

Simba's translation was done more than a decade after the opening up to this capitalist world and culture. Simba's intended audience is the youth. The current

⁸ See Maliyamkono and Bagachwa (1997).

⁹ See Shivji in Horace Campbell (1992).

youth is becoming much more audible through its use of Swahili that is littered with slang expressions, a Swahili that is the representation of a modern and young lifestyle. It is in this light for instance that *Bongo flava* has surpassed *taarab* and dance hall music as the music of choice amongst the young. *Bongo flava*, a term derived from the term *Bongo* which means ‘brains’, a metaphor for Tanzania, the land where one has to be shrewd to survive, and *flava*, the swahilization of the term ‘flavour’; a term that evolved in the 1990s from American hip hop. This distinct music was appropriated by local musicians and currently includes flavours from local music and *taarab* from Zanzibar, as well as American hip hop. The singers tend to have moralistic tendencies.¹⁰ They would either praise representations of a modern lifestyle or lament about the living conditions while voicing the desires of the youth using metaphors that give the songs a superficial air of being morally accepted.

There exists a definite shift between the youth that read colonial translations where sexual innuendos for instance were implied in phrases such as, ‘conversing for a long time’, and the current overt and slang representation. Globalization has played a vital role in enculturation in Tanzania although the changes can also be pinned down to the spread of HIV and AIDS in Tanzania. AIDS has claimed many lives of youths between the ages of 15 and 35, therefore for the parents it has been necessary to break the taboo on the question of sex and discuss openly with their children. The State has also realized that the calamity brought about by HIV needs to be contained,

¹⁰ In 2004 one of the most famous Bongo Flava songs was *Mikasi* (Scissors) by a certain Ngwair, it was awarded the Kilimanjaro music award. This song boasts the routine of a group of young men who are not employed but nevertheless enjoy their life through *mitungi*, *mikasi*, *blanti* and *pamba*. *Mitungi* means jars, this is a metaphor for alcohol; *mikasi*, which means scissors, is used metaphorically to describe the sexual act; *pamba* means cotton and is used as a metaphor for beautiful clothes whereas *blanti* is the swahilization of the American slang, ‘blunt’, which means ‘marijuana’. Thus we have the representation of the lifestyle craved by the youth where appearance, having alcohol, marijuana and women play an important role. The lyrics are expressed using slang or street language (*lugha ya mitaani*) which is understood by the majority of youth. It has to be understood that, to the new generation, there is nothing metaphorical about *mikasi* (scissors) referring to sex; it is simply their lingo, the slang. This particular song was later banned by the Ministry of culture and education for containing unacceptable values.

thence there is now sex education directed at the youth. This openness has allowed taboo vocabulary to be used for instance in theatrical performances that are sponsored by the government so as to conscientize. Thus, we find that, although BAKITA¹¹ would prefer to term ‘sexually transmitted diseases’, *magonjwa ya kujamiana*, a term derived from the root word *jamii*, which means ‘society’, it has not been possible to stop an open discussion that includes words such as *ngono*, ‘sex’. Simba’s translation seems to be informed by, or rather, the result of this new Swahili society. A globalized, much more outward looking society.

6.6 Cultural Analysis of the Translation

This section will analyse the choices made by Simba in tackling the obvious cultural shifts between the source text and the target text. In the first instance, we find that the original Arabic title, *al-tariq*, which means ‘the way’ or ‘the quest’ is lost in both the English translation and as a knock on effect, on the Swahili translation. *Al-tariq* is a term that is very close to the word used by Muslim sufists when they refer to particular ways to approach God. Thus for example, one would hear of the al-Tariq al-Suhrawardiyya, a confrere or school of thought started by an Iranian, Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi. In Swahili, ‘al-tariq’ is the equivalent of a *tarika*. In East Africa, two of the most common al-tariq which still have a vast majority of followers are the *tarika la shadhiliya*, ‘al-tariq shadhiliyya’ which has deep roots in Kilwa and *tarika la kadiriya*, ‘al tariq kadiriya’. This means therefore that the term *tarika* would have been a direct translation of the Arabic original if it carried the same metaphysical meaning as the Arabic term. Unfortunately, the Swahili term is not loaded with the connotations of its original. The metaphysical context in this novel is explained by El Enany (1993) as Saber’s search for his father being a symbolic search for God or

¹¹ Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa, ‘National Swahili Board’.

meaning in life. The theme of search for meaning or way of existence is present in other novels by Mahfouz including the *Children of Gebelawi* (1959). As an existential writer, Naguib believed that individuals define and create meaning in their lives. Each is entirely responsible for themselves and this responsibility is outside any belief system such as a religion. This is the reason why Saber, the protagonist, is not successful in his search.

It is unfortunate that all this symbolism is lost in translation. Neither the English nor the Swahili titles give any inkling to a confrery. This is one of the shortcomings of shifts in translation. Had Deogratias Simba titled his translation ‘*Tarika*’, it wouldn’t have had the double edge that the term ‘al-tariq’ does. Language carries the experience of a people and, in the case of Swahili, *tarika* does not carry with it its original Arabic experience.

Similar to the previous case studies, I have sought the unveiling of translation strategies in regards to different themes. Under the theme of culture, I will look at the representation of eroticism which will then offer a comparative analysis with the rendering of this theme in translations that were carried out before it. I will also look at the physical environment and foreign concepts such as ‘the Oedipus complex’, to name but one.

6.6.1 Eroticism

The novel is narrated through a love story where a man, Saber, is torn between two women, ‘one a raging fire, the other a gentle spring breeze’ (pg 366). The Swahili translator presents this love story as it evolves, guiding the audience into the mind of Saber, the protagonist whose mindset is extremely sexual and passionate. Simba does not disguise nor does he paraphrase the words in the plot.

As previously pointed out, the traditional Swahili society is very 'prude' about concepts that have to do with sex.¹² These are only discussed in private or in quarters that are concerned with rites of passage - *Unyago* and *Jando*, where one went from girlhood to womanhood and boyhood to manhood respectively. In the case of *Unyago*, the traditional instructor *Kungwi*, normally a married woman assisted by other married women instructed the girl on wifely duties. The girl would be locked up in a room at her family home and would be well fed with soups and other rich foods while secretly taught what is normally considered taboo when discussed in the open.¹³

If a man is interested in a girl, as Saber was of Elham and Karima, he would be expected to court her through a go-between *mshenga* who would seek the girl's father's consent. Thus the whole issue of relationships and sex to the Swahili, as is the case in many cultures, is traditionally and historically surrounded by cultural norms and sanctions. This is made obvious through the translation strategies employed by Brenn, Johnson, Nyerere and Adam who, when confronted with erotic references, tended to conform to social etiquette and norms.

However, in the 1970s, a trend was initiated where eroticism was neither omitted nor paraphrased as had become the norm. This was done by a few translators including Paul Sozigwa who translated Okot P'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* (1966) into *Wimbo wa Lawino* (1975). *Song of Lawino* (1966) questions the type of liberation that Africa should adopt. Should Africans honor its traditions as does Lawino or should it adopt the European values that were already set in place during the colonial period as does her husband, Ocol? Lawino's lamenting praises African cultural customs as opposed to the colonial culture. She feels very strongly about the cultural dances of her people, the traditional wooing and relationships, African beauty, African food, African ways of telling the time and African ancestral religions. In this

¹² See chapter four.

¹³ See Hamdani (1995).

respect, the nature of the work is itself resistant to the West which fascinated many of the colonized.

The voice and persona of Lawino would be very familiar to the Swahili. She is a mature lady who talks openly, as do some Swahili women of a certain age. When she says that one holds on to a man's love through giving them comforts such as good warm food and a bucket of hot water. The Swahili girls are actually taught this during *Unyago*. Thus, rightly so, in *Wimbo wa Lawino* (1975) Paul Sozigwa does not offer any footnotes on pages 22-23 to explain that a flexible waist and beads on a girl are erotic concepts. These concepts exist in Swahili. In the translation, Lawino comes across as any other Swahili or African woman. Sozigwa does not omit erotic references, despite the fact that some would shock the Swahili. These include words such as '*pumbu*' (pg 22) which means 'testicles', '*upele wa matakoni*' (pg 23) which means 'pimples on buttocks'. He also includes a whole passage on kissing where the men are said to suck the slimy saliva from the mouths of their partners, as white people do (pg 25). This is also rendered, word for word, into Swahili.

One could argue that Sozigwa was driven by the urge to produce a faithful translation. Thus he did not heed to the level of cultural and moral acceptability among the Swahili. That argument is annulled by the fact that Sozigwa has been extremely target oriented in his text, inserting Swahili expressions and familiar concepts whenever possible. In that regard, one can argue that he probably aimed at shunning the norm of previous translators, specifically colonial translators such as Brenn and Johnson who were quite prude in their work. In the same breath, the words uttered by Lawino could have come from those of many Swahili women, although they could not have pronounced them in public. Swahili women are normally very open to erotic discussion when they are among other close females. And Lawino is addressing herself to friends; this may be one of the reasons that prompted Sozigwa's

explicitness. In this respect, Sozigwa may have seen his translation as a reflection of the Swahili society rather than a breaking of barriers of acceptability as informed by social norms and etiquette.

Interestingly, most probably as a reflection of the strategies that he employed, his translation was not available in the Tanzanian book market for quite a long time, although the English version was. Recently, the book has become available in many bookshops in Dar es Salaam although it is the English version that is part of the school syllabi and not the translation. The fact that the work, with all its sexual innuendos, is studied in English is most probably seen as a buffer. In this light, and in retrospect, Simba can actually be seen as an active element in the revival of a trend that was initiated in the 1970s. We find, for instance, Simba translates:

ST: His father must have enjoyed such surroundings when he made love to his mother (pg 336).

TT: *Baba yake atakuwa alistarehe katika mazingira kama hayo wakati alipofanya ngono na mama yake* (pg 22).

The phrase ‘making love’ is translated as ‘*alipofanya ngono*’ which translates as ‘having sex’. For years, such an explicit rendering would have been seen as taboo. Swahili people do not talk about sex, especially if it is linked to one’s parents. The idea is simply inconceivable to many Swahili. I interviewed Mr Saify Kiango, a freelance translator based at the Tanzania Publishing House, and he informed me, ‘my first instinct would have been to omit that passage’.¹⁴ According to Mr Kiango, the thought of a young man wondering about his parents having intercourse is not acceptable and is rather perverse. Saify Kiango’s work, similar to many of his colleagues, leans towards domestication and target orientedness. His aim in translation is for the Swahili to relate to a given text. Interestingly, this kind of

¹⁴ Interview with Mr Saify Kiango, Tanzania Publishing house, 14th July 2004.

thinking is shared by many. The direct equivalent to ‘making love’ is ‘*kufanya mapenzi*’, ‘*mapenzi*’ means ‘love’, interestingly Simba refers directly to ‘sex’. It seems that Simba aimed at and managed to shock, and in the process may be reviving a literary translation trend which could grow into a norm in Swahili translation; a norm that would have been long awaited for by the new generation.

Consider the following examples:

ST: Conversations that disguised passion and powerful desires. A stolen kiss followed by a friendly tussle (pg 337).

TT: *mazungumzo yaliyogubikwa na mahaba na nyege kali ya ngono. Busu la kushtukiza lililofuatiwa na kusukumana kusiko madhara* (pg 22).

Gloss: **Conversations disguised with love and powerful lust for sex. A surprise kiss followed by an innocent tussle.**

ST: ...in a sea of sin, lust and pleasure ... (pg 364).

TT: ...*katika bahari ya dhambi , kiu ya ngono na starehe...* (pg 51).

Gloss: ... **in a sea of sin**, thirst for sex and pleasure.

It seems that for the target text to carry the same meaning as the source, the equivalence to a number of words that refer to the erotic has to include the word *ngono*, which means ‘sex’. It has to be noted that in Swahili, generally, words such as *ngono* and *nyege* can not be uttered out loud without shocking. This is due to the taboo that has existed for centuries in regards to the erotic. Thus, for instance, in the above example, ‘powerful desires’ and ‘lust’ all have to be linked to sex to convey the meaning of the source text. Lust, which has been translated as *kiu ya ngono*, which means ‘thirst for sex’, has its equivalence which is *nyege*. ‘Powerful desires’ which has been translated as *nyege kali ya ngono* which means ‘powerful lust for sex’, could have been translated as *hamu kali*.

Simba needed to put stress on the sexual nature of the source text, which a term like *hamu kali* would not really be able to convey. This shows the level of taboo that has existed in regards to words so that, upon hearing *hamu kali*, Simba's targeted audience, the youth, would not immediately relate this to sex, although the older generation would. It was thence important for Simba to add the word *ngono* in his translation so as to make it explicitly obvious. There is here a shift from the time when all that was needed was a slight implication in phrases such as the characters 'went to the bedroom' or 'dreamt of going to the bedroom', to the modern times when what is done in the bedroom and what is thought of in connection to the bedroom is uttered explicitly.

Simba's translation echoes the efforts of various organizations that aim at breaking taboos and myths around sex and sexuality. BBC Swahili has started a youth magazine programme *Kimasomaso*¹⁵, aims at exploring sexual health and sexual practices. The programme announces itself as one that aims at raising the curtains on a subject that has largely remained taboo in East Africa but has literally wreaked havoc on people's lives.

Let us consider another example:

ST: **The beautiful dark girl, her almond eyes flashing with temptation and seduction (pg 333).**

TT: ***Msichana mrembo mweusimweusi, macho yake ya mviringo yakimetameta kwa ushawishi na hali ya kutamanisha (pg 18).***

Gloss: **A beautiful darkish girl, her round eyes twinkling with temptation and a state of tempting.**

In the above example, Simba has used the direct equivalence of 'temptation' which is *kushawishi*. The term 'seduction' on the other hand, translated as *hali ya kutamanisha*

¹⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/swahili/highlights/cluster/2005/07/050629_kimasomaso.shtml.

which literally translates as ‘state of tempting’, has its direct equivalence, *kutongoza*, which refers to ‘the act of tempting one so as to have a sexual relationship’. With reference to the fact that Simba has used the term *ngono* abundantly in his translation, he would not be expected to shy away from using the term *kutongoza*. Therefore, his word choice may be a stylistic measure where he wanted to describe Karima as a beautiful and tempting girl rather than a seductive lady.

In regards to her colouring and its implications, one has to remember that the Swahili or Tanzanians for that matter have two poles of extreme. There is the so called *mweupe* which means ‘white’ and *mweusi* which means ‘black’. In the same breath, it has to be noted that the ‘white Tanzanian’, is not a blonde or brunette person but rather a ‘caramel coloured person’ and the ‘black Swahili’ would be of ebony complexion. In between there are two other colours, *Maji ya kunde*, which is literally, ‘mang pea coloured’; this would be a person whose colouring is similar to chestnuts and is also considered, *mweupe mweupe*, which literally means ‘white-ish white-ish’. The majority of Tanzanians or Swahili people would be *mweusi mweusi*, which literally means ‘black-ish black-ish’. The repetition of the adjective *mweupe* or *mweusi* means that the person is not really black or not really white. Thence, when Simba translates that Karima looked *mweusi mweusi*, it means that she is of the darker in-between complexion. She is a true beauty.

Simba explains the shape of the eye, *ya mviringo* which means ‘round’ and does not substitute the word used in the English translation, ‘almond’ for its Swahili equivalence, *lozi*. This is because in Swahili, *macho ya lozi* would not make sense. This is one of the rare occasions when Simba domesticates his translation; moulding Karima into an idealized Swahili woman who is black-ish with round eyes. These happen to be markers of beauty in the Swahili world and Simba seems to conform to the expectations of his audience. The women are also believed to be much more

attractive when plump, not fat, but ‘pleasantly plump’. This fact is echoed in the following example which takes place when Saber first sees Karima. He describes her as:

ST: what a woman! (pg333).

TT: *Bonge la mwanamke!* (pg18).

The term *Bonge* carries with it an aspect of awe. *Bonge* means something ‘big and beautiful’ or ‘large and attractive’. Thence the initial image of a woman who is *bonge la mwanamke* is that she is big and pleasing to the eye. Ideally, she would be hour glass shaped with a pair of hips and a behind that would be wide and huge.

In fact, there used to be a monthly magazine in Tanzania titled *Sani*. Two of the rival characters in it were Betina, an extremely skinny woman and Zena who was pear shaped with hips and a behind that were greatly exaggerated. The image of Zena was that of the ideal Tanzanian woman. All the male characters in the magazine such as Lodi Lofa longed to have women with her physique. This physique resonates with the idealized image of women in Swahili films and in *taarab* music concerts of the *rusha roho*, literally ‘hold your breath’ type where thus shaped women would confidently parade on the stage showing their physical attractions.

This image of *bonge la mwanamke* conforms to the ideals of Swahili and Tanzanian beauty. In the English translation, Karima’s shape is not explicit. Simba could have referred to her as *kipande cha mwanamke* so as to be neutral. But it is obvious that the audience would find a darkish complexioned, big and hour glass shaped woman much more attractive. Simba has been happy to oblige in portraying this idealized woman.

Although this work has been source oriented, mostly leaning towards exposing the Swahili audience to a foreign culture, there are instances when Simba naturalizes his references. These are far between, but, nevertheless, it seems that similar to Brenn

and Nyerere who preceded him, Simba cannot ignore the cultural values of the Swahili.

6.6.2 Physical Environment

In my interview with Mr Simba, he informed me that one of the most difficult concepts to translate was to do with the infrastructure especially in relation to buildings and spaces. For instance, ‘Tahrir Square’ is translated as ‘*Uwanja wa wazi wa Tahrir*’ (pg 29) which translates as ‘the open air grounds of Tahrir’. This is because the concept and experiences carried by the word ‘square’ do not exist in Swahili. Simba tried to explain the concept. Also, Cairo, similar to Western cities, has buildings where the entrance is through communal doors that lead into corridors and stairs; these in turn lead into the divided storeys which are then sub-divided into flats or apartments. Some of the flats are also located in the attic or the basement.

Traditional Swahili dwellings were single storey; later on double storey buildings were introduced, specifically in towns and cities. Currently, cities such as Dar es Salaam have seen the phenomenon of skyscrapers. Nevertheless, most people still live in single storey buildings unlike in the West or in Egyptian cities where the majority live in flats. Also, despite the fact that there are skyscrapers in cities such as Dar es Salaam, concepts of basement and attic are still foreign. And there aren’t as yet equivalents of specific terminologies referring to flat, basement, first floor, attic and ground floor. Thus, when Saber asks Aly Seriakos about the whereabouts of Karima, their conversation is as follows:

ST: ...I’ve just seen Madame enter **her flat**

Ah. Maybe. Does Madame live in **the flat**?

Mr Khalil’s **flat. On the roof** (pg 351).

TT: ...*Nimemwona Bi. Mkubwa sasa hivi akienda kwenye **ghorofa** lake*

*Aah! Labda. Je, Bi Mkubwa anaishi kwenye **ghorofa** hilo?*

***Fleti** ya Bwana Khalil. **Juu kabisa** (Pg 37).*

Simba translates ‘flat’ as both *fleti* and *ghorofa*. Historically *ghorofa* is a building with more than two storeys. At the same time, *ghorofa* means both storey and floor; for instance, he writes *ghorofa ya nne* (pg 36) meaning 4th floor. Since the Swahili call a block of flats *maghorofani*, thence *ghorofa* can be a flat. For lack of specific terms, Simba uses the term *ghorofa* to mean ‘flat’ so as to point out to the fact that he is talking of something located in a storeyed building. In the same breath, he also adapts and Swahilizes the English term ‘flat’ as *fleti*. *Fleti* is actually commonly used by people in the cities when they refer to a flat, thence, had he chosen to, he could have used this term only.

Another example:

***kighorofa** kilicho juu ya paa (pg 107).*

Gloss: A **small building** located above the roof.

The prefix, *ki* indicates something small. *Kighorofa* comes across as a multi-storeyed building located on the roof. The author was referring to a flat located at the top of the building. There was not much that Simba could have done to convey terms such as an attic. They are culturally removed from the Swahili. To reduce bouts of incomprehension, Simba had to resort to explanations, as we find in the example below:

ST: He visited him in his **ground floor room**, shuttered and musty (pg 331).

TT: *Alimtembelea katika **chumba chake kilicho sakafu ya chini ya jengo**, madirisha yamefungwa na kimejaa harufu ya vumbi* (pg 15-16).

Gloss: He visited him in his **room located on the bottom floor of the building**, the windows were locked and it was full of a dusty smell.

Sakafu is the equivalent of the ‘floor’; when one says *sakafu ya chini* it means the floor below or the floor underneath. Reference here is to the floor that we walk upon. In the Swahili, Simba had to say *sakafu ya chini ya jengo* so as to refer to the fact that he is talking of a ground floor storey of the building rather than the floor within a house. Most of these concepts are new if not alien in Swahili and it is for this reason that Simba seems to have struggled with them.

Swahili translators have tended to preserve the given physical environment as they are presented in the source text. This is seen in Nyerere’s translations for instance, based in Venice and *The Nights*, based in Baghdad. I found that it is the translations that are complete adaptations, such as *Hawala ya Fedha* (1980), derived from Sembene Ousmane’s *The Money order* (1972), initially written in French as *Le mandat* (1965), where the physical setting and environment changes. Amandina Lihamba, who translates and adapts the Swahili version of the work, informs readers that her work is derived from Sembene’s. The words at the back of the book are: ‘*tamthiliya hii, ambayo inatokana na riwaya, The Money Order, iliyoandikwa na mwandishi mashuhuri wa Senegal, Sembene Ousmane, inajadili...*’ (Lihamba, 1980). That translates as ‘this drama, which is derived from *The Money Order*, a novel by the famous Senegalese aauthor, Sembene Ousmane, deals with....’ Therefore, Lihamba has adapted the work from a novel to a theatrical drama. She also does not refer to it as a translation. In fact, it is only at the back of the work and in the small script within that we are informed of its source. The front cover of the book mentions Lihamba as the author, the money order itself is addressed to a Swahili old man, Ibrahim Chande, residing in Dar es Salaam and it offers him 2000 Tanzanian Shillings. Therefore one is not surprised that the setting is ‘*mji mdogo wa pwani katika Afrika Mashariki*’ (introduction) which means, ‘a small East African coastal town’ and that the nephew who sends him money resides in London and not Paris. In

this light, it is expected that most probably only the gist of the source text would come across into the adaptation.

Therefore, I found that, apart from such complete adaptations, most Swahili translations have sought to present the physical environment of their source texts rather than try to adopt them to the Swahili setting. In this light, Simba has followed the norm.

6.6.3 Foreign Concepts

When faced with concepts and terms which are specific to certain cultures, translators use various strategies. One of these being that of *explicitation*. This takes place when the shifts are explained to the target audience. According to Klaudy (2001:80-84) there are four types of explicitations. The obligatory explicitation dictated by grammatical structures, optional explicitation dictated by style preferences and translator's chosen strategies, pragmatic explicitation which are dictated by the difference in culture between the source and target languages and translation-inherent explicitation which are the result of the nature of translation.

Although aiming at a de-familiarizing work, Simba has nevertheless tended to apply this strategy. Consider the following translation:

TT: ***Bomba la kurusha maji juu lilitiririsha maji kwenye kishemu chake cha pembenne*** (Pg 29).

Gloss: A **pipe for emitting water upwards** sprinkled water into its **four cornered area**.

The image evoked in the mind of the Swahili reader is that of a tap that emits water upwards then into some kind of area with four corners. The image is not removed from:

ST: A **fountain** gurgled in the **quadrangle** (pg 343).

Simba had thought of using the word *chemchemi* which is a ‘water spring’, but the phrase ‘*chemchemi ya kurusha maji juu*’ evokes an image of the exotic wilderness rather than a man-made fountain. In Tanzania water is available publicly through pipes or pumping wells where the masses queue for hours on end to get their daily supply and also through private taps in people’s homes. There is constant rationing which means that it is only available at certain areas on certain days and only at certain times; thus aesthetic concepts such as fountains seem rather extravagant. Simba thought it best to limit his translation to what the majority of the Swahili would grasp.

Apart from the above, there are also foreign concepts which cannot be explained but rather generalized, consider the following example:

ST: the sea side girl with the salty taste and **carnations** in her hair (pg 354).

TT: *yule msichana wa pembezoni mwa bahari akiwa na mwili wenye chumvichumvi na **maua** kichwani kwake* (pg 41).

Gloss: That girl from the sea side who had **a body that was salty** and **flowers** in her head.

The Western reader would be immediately struck by the romantic imagery evoked through the phrase above. Carnations, the sea side and her salty taste all imply some kind of courtship. In the Swahili translation Simba should be applauded for having conveyed the right image of a beautiful siren despite having to use explicitation where ‘salty taste’ is explained as ‘a body which is salty’.

Explicitation is a strategy that forms part of Toury’s law of standardization. It has also been referred to as a ‘universal of translation’ (Baker, 1986: 180-184). Baker presents four translation universals which are principles of translation behaviour. These are explicitation, simplification, normalization and levelling out. According to Baker (1996) these are strategies that occur at a very high rate in translation. Having

said that, I would like to re-assert the fact that, I find translation laws and universals too generalizing and will not be delving into them in this study.

Moving on from explication, I found that there were also instances when Simba had to apply general terms to denote specific terms. For instance the ‘carnations’ are simply translated as *maua*, ‘flowers’ since there is no specific term for carnations in Swahili. Generally flowers such as the rose and carnations are offered to express love and admiration. The different colours of this flower represent different concepts for instance red carnations show love and pink carnations are given to one’s mother. Legend has it that carnations are a symbol of a mother’s love for her child since they came into being after getting showered by Virgin Mary’s tears when she saw her son, Jesus, on the cross.

Such Western and Mediterranean habits and customs are lost to most Swahili people. In fact, the majority would be oblivious to the meanings portrayed by different flowers. But there are a select few from the new generation who for instance tend to use the rose as symbol of their love. Interestingly, there is a tradition of giving one’s lover gold or a pair of *khanga* cloth which has been assimilated from the orient. Thus with time, it is thought that, changes in society and specifically globalisation, will see even more changes in the region.

Consider another example:

ST: Saber’s **Oedipus complex** (pg 444).

TT: *Tatizo alilokua nalo Saber ni ile hali waliyo nayo watoto ya kupenda jinsia nyingine* (pg 135).

Gloss: The problem that Saber has is that which children have of **loving those of a different sex.**

It is common for Swahili translators to find that they have to convey multiple layers of information which needless to say, lead to longer translation texts. Similarly,

since one is translating for a different audience than the source, the target audience tends to have information load which is inevitable. The most common type of explication in Swahili is the pragmatic explication, a good example of which is the above translation of the Oedipus complex. The complex is implicit in Western cultures. Simba's understanding and rendering of the Oedipus complex is that it is a heterosexual as well as homosexual love, since the term *jinsia nyingine* refers to 'of different sexual orientation'. The Oedipus complex normally refers to love or lust of a son for their mother. One has to question Simba's interpretation of Oedipus complex and in turn, its place in the Swahili society. Could it be that, this modern translator could not bring himself to explain the lust of a son for their mother or he simply did not know its meaning? The students from Zanaki High School¹⁶ whom I had asked to translate this phrase offered various options. These include: *Matatizo ya Idipasi* which means 'problems of Oedipus', *changamano la Idipasi* which means 'the complexities of Oedipus'. No one offered to explain the complex.

The story of Oedipus the King has been translated into Swahili by Nyerere's compatriot, Mushi, as *Mfalme Edipode* (1971). Simba does not refer back to Edipode when translating this concept; he tries to explain what he understands as the meaning of the phrase. This concurs with what a number of respondents informed me, including Walter Bgoya, publisher at large, Issa Shivji, a renowned academician and writer, and Demere Kitunga, publisher. They all argued that the main problem in Tanzania is that there is no reading culture. Walter Bgoya advanced that the consumption pattern in Tanzania is such that people are much more interested in enjoyments that include alcohol consumption and music. The culture that was prevalent in the colonial period and a decade or so after independence where libraries and book shops played a big role in people's socialising disappeared. There are 18

¹⁶ Questionnaire handed out at Zanaki High School, Upanga, Dar es Salaam, Friday 3rd November 2006.

recognized libraries in the whole of Tanzania. The state of the main public library, Tanganyika library, is that of decline. There are whole sections without books and dust has been accumulating on the books for decades. Book-shops which are mostly located in the city centres stock text-books and school materials. To quote Walter Bgoya, 'The market in Tanzania is quite small, and so is interest, there is no reading culture in Tanzania'.¹⁷ People are interested in television, radio, computers and newspapers; reading books or works of art is secondary. He added that setting up a book-shop requires a substantial amount as capital among a number of other requirements such as communication with publishers and an audience that has a purchasing power and a developed book buying habit, all of which are huge hurdles in Tanzania. Issa Shivji¹⁸ reminded me that reading is a luxury; the working class are busy trying to find their next meal, not their next book! This implies that, had Simba referred to *Mfalme Edipode*, the audience would most probably have been even more lost. Even the students simply swahilized the name Oedipus into *Idipasi*. They did not link the translation to the phrase. All this boils down to the fact that the issue of finance is a very big problem in Tanzania as it is in most of the developing world.

The example on the Oedipus complex is a classic example of implicit cultural information triggering explication. Pym (1993:123) explains that,

when you're crossing a cultural wall, you encounter particular places requiring textual expansion. The most difficult terms tend to require some paraphrase or explanation, usually justifiable as the explication of implicit cultural information.

Whether one interprets Simba's choices as diverging or converging with translation trends that have preceded Simba, it cannot be argued that Simba seems to have been informed by the understanding that, in such cases where features such as customs, myths, historical and literary allusions need to be translated into the target language,

¹⁷ Interview with Walter Bgoya, 7th November 2006

¹⁸ Interviewed at his home, Dar es Salaam, 1st November 2006

translators should aim at making translations intelligible by explaining the unfamiliar in the given culture.

6.7 Analysis of the Language and Style

This novel was written during the time when Mahfouz had started to construct his works more freely and thus uses interior monologue and an impersonal style; Simba translates these styles masterfully. In most instances he carries Mahfouz's style quite well; for instance, in the example below, Simba has gone as far as placing a comma at the exact location that it was placed in the English source – striving for the idealized equivalence that means faithful.

ST: How often you've watched her sitting next to the old man, her husband (pg 355).

TT: *Ni mara ngapi umemtazama akiwa amekaa karibu na yule mzee, mume wake...*(Pg 42).

But there are instances when this was harder, for example:

ST: **Sore eyes** from looking, searching, scrutinizing the teeming Cairo streets (pg 355).

TT: ***Macho yalimvimba** kwa kuyafungua sana, kusaka, kuchungua mitaa ya Cairo yenye utitiri wa watu* (pg 42).

Gloss: **His eyes were swollen** from being constantly open, searching, scrutinizing the Cairo streets teeming with people.

The translator has personalized this phrase. 'Sore eyes' is rendered 'his eyes were swollen'. Reference is thence made directly to the protagonist. The meaning remains the same but the style is changed. This may be a conscious choice by the translator who might have wanted to retain contact with his protagonist.

At this point, one can argue that, it seems that there has been a general trend for Swahili translators to align their work on the style of their given source texts. We find that for instance, as discussed in previous chapters, both Mushi and Nyerere used sixteen syllables in their translations of Shakespeare since the style echoes Shakespeare's iambic pentameter. Similarly, Paul Sozigwa has preserved the repetitions that were used by P'Bitek. These were used as refrains or to emphasize ideas. Interestingly, the Acoli version is said to have contained a lot more repetitions which were therefore omitted in the English version. The Swahili version is similar to the English version; we find that once again, a translation is used as a source text for the Swahili translation. Thus on chapter three, there are three repetitions of '*kama wafanyavyo Wazungu*' (pg 25) which is the literal rendering of 'as white people do' (pg 44). The Acoli version contains ten repetitions. Similarly, Simba has also aligned his translation to Mahfouz's English translation. Thus, although it is not always possible, nevertheless he tends to insert commas and other types of punctuation exactly as it has been done in his source.

6.7.1 Usage of Footnotes and Annotations

The English translation has included some paratextual commentaries so as to make the work more comprehensible. This is a common feature in translations that depict a world that is quite removed from the target audience. Thus, finding 'introductions, footnotes, critical essays, glossaries, maps and the like' is common, 'the translator can embed the translated text in a shell that explains necessary cultural and literary background for the receiving audience and that acts as a running commentary on the translated work' (Tymoczko, 1999:22). He explains the different cultural aspects such as the meanings of different funeral cries and the tradition where in-laws buy the

widow's items of clothing. The foreign concepts are explained, making it easier for the Swahili to absorb the text.

Usage of footnotes has been quite prevalent in post-colonial translations. We find that for instance Prof Maganga also widely employed these in Miriama Ba's translation of *So Long a letter* (1981) as *Barua ndefu kama hii*. Footnotes are largely used to make explicit cultural concepts. In the above mentioned translation, they are used to explain the shifts in translation. Thus, where the text refers to in-laws 'dressing' the widows - '*kutuvisha*' (pg 9), a footnote is included to explain that it is the duty of sisters in law to dress widows during '*eda*'. '*Eda*' is the special period for mourning (normally four months and ten days); it is an Islamic tradition meant to safeguard the end of a marriage. Thus, if a woman were pregnant, this would be discovered during *eda* and the child that she will bear would not be out of wedlock – *haram*. The translator has included this familiar term, despite its absence in the English and French versions of the work, due to its familiarity to the Swahili. Footnotes have also been used to explain foreign sayings, thus the translator explains that '*mwanamume aliyevaa suruali mbili*' (pg 53) which literally means 'a man who wears two trousers', actually means a man who wears Western items of clothing.

Similarly, footnotes are also very prevalent in *Wimbo wa Lawino*. Their main function is to explain different cultural specificity. For instance, the name *Odure* (pg 56), contains a footnote to explain that it is a general name given to boys who linger in the kitchen. Myth has it that a certain *Odure* burnt his private parts due to this 'feminine' habit.

Simba inserted all the footnotes from the English translation and also added some of his own; for instance, the term *Sheikh el-Haara* is explained to be 'the elder of an alley'. He also gives the equivalence of a piestre as one cent of the Egyptian

Pound. Interestingly, his footnotes are not inserted at the end of the page but rather next to the words. He also tends to italicize the foreign terminologies:

Piesta ishirini kwa usiku. (*Piesta* = senti moja ya paundi ya Misri).

There are also instances when he takes the liberty of adding his own annotations, for instance, he explains that a *taverna* is a small Greek café. This is not always done in the English where often terms like *taverna* are taken to be widely understood by the majority who are expected to be familiar with them. Nevertheless, there are instances when these footnotes were not needed by the Swahili, for example:

ST: Karima * (pg 358).

Footnote: Karima means generous

TT: *Karima* * (pg 45).

Footnote: *Karima maana yake mkarimu*

There was a pun intended by Mahfouz in his original Arabic which was lost in the English translation but which resurfaces in Swahili. This is because the root word, *karim*, which means ‘kind’, is one of the many Swahili words of Arabic origin. Thus one can argue that the Swahili did not need this footnote since the pun would be understood by the Swahili. Simba’s stance is in-line with the fact that he tends to be extremely source oriented in his work, at times, he is blindly so. He therefore inserts the footnote explaining the meaning of the word ‘karima’ and then introduces the pun ‘*Karima... Mkarimu kweli...*’(pg 45).

Aware of this trap, we find that in translating Oyono’s *Boi* (1976), Kahaso and Mbwele do not translate the English footnote that explains that, after eating a meal, men scratch their tummies to indicate that they have eaten well. This is because the Swahili do the same. The Swahili also burp loudly to show that they are extremely satisfied.

It is obvious that, as a stylistic measure, footnotes act as both foreignizing and domesticating agents. Their very presence is proof of the existence of a translator, of the existence of another culture being brought across while at the same time, they are familiarizing agents, bringing the foreign home by making texts more explicit. Despite this double edged role, footnotes are proof of a tendency towards familiarizing the foreign to make it much more accessible.

6.7.2 Foreign vocabulary

Simba's tackling of foreign constructions ranges from leaving the words as they are, for instance *cheers* (pg 40), a term that is very familiar to Tanzanians, although it has its Swahili equivalence, *afya* which means 'health', resounding the French, *santé*, to instances when he swahilizes the terms or offers explanations to what is referred to. Interestingly, this trend is also quite prevalent in the only translation that has been undertaken from a local dialect into Swahili, Aniceti Kitereza's *Bwana myombekere na bibi Bugunoka* (1975).¹⁹

Although Simba does swahilize some foreign lexical elements such as *glavu*, 'gloves', *sinki*, 'sink', *chokleti*, 'chocolate', *juisi*, 'juice', he does not adhere to the post-colonial trend of swahilizing proper names, nor does he swahilize the towns and cities as has been the norm for many translators. He has included Swahili constructions for words such as *juisi*, 'juice', which is called *sharubati* in Swahili; interestingly there are instances when he uses the Swahili term, *sharubati* (pg 32).

He also introduces foreign terms such as *naghrileh* (pg 44), a completely alien object to the Swahili - which he explains as an expensive cigarette. There are a number of objects in the work which do not have any equivalent in Swahili, largely due to the fact that they are Western concepts, for instance the term 'sandwich' (pg

¹⁹ See chapter one, also see Masoko, 1996:72-81.

385), which he translates as *sandwichi* (pg 72). Normally the Swahili eat sliced bread as part of breakfast, or various types of breads, for example *chapati* and *mkate wa ufuta* with tea or as accompaniments to curries, but the concept of having two slices of bread with delicacies such as ham, cheese and tomatoes are completely alien. Nevertheless, the youth that is being addressed by Simba are familiar with sandwiches, which means that his swahilizing the term is not out of place.

Nevertheless, despite being aware of what a sandwich is, the following type of sandwich sounds absurd to the Swahili:

ST: **Sardine and pastrami sandwich** (pg 385).

TT: *Sandwichi ya dagaa na ya nyama ya ng'ombe ya kuchomwa* (pg 72).

The term *dagaa* refers to various types of sardines eaten in a dried form by poor and middle income groups throughout Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. The little sun-dried fish are often salty and if dried by the beach, they can be sandy as well. They are normally sold in huge piles in local markets. *Dagaa* have a distinct smell that can be unpleasant. The fish needs to be thoroughly cleaned before being cooked, often into a curry-like sauce eaten with *ugali* (stiff porridge). As noted, *dagaa* is largely eaten by the working class, often on a daily basis. The characteristics of *Dagaa* in Tanzania are similar to anchovies and they are not canned. In the above mentioned translation, Simba has stretched the term *dagaa* to include the tinned sardines that we find in Europe and America. Unfortunately the image evoked of the small sun-dried fish laid down between two slices of bread is quite strange and has worked well to show cultural differences. On the other hand, the 'pastrami', which Simba has explained as a barbecued beef evokes a much more familiar image, especially since meat is a delicacy in most African societies. *Nyama choma*, literally – barbecued meat/beef, is a favourite pastime for many East Africans.

It is unclear what the sardine and pastrami sandwich is in Arabic, but I believe this to be some kind of a 'shawarma', or a similar meat and bread based wrap. Had Simba used the term 'shawarma', the Swahili might have been even more lost by the foreignness evoked. This is actually one of the phrases that I had included in my questionnaire and most students either left a blank or generalized the phrase and translated it simply as *sandwichi*.²⁰

At times Simba has tried to explain the meaning of different objects through their uses or by literally translating the terms. This strategy has worked quite well. For example:

ST: The Turkish divan (pg 393).

TT: *Kiti kitanda cha kituruki* (pg 82), (a Turkish chair-bed).

Swahili is a gender free language where even pronouns that refer to the female and the male such as 'he' and 'she' do not exist. It has therefore been imperative for Simba to explicate some terms which may seem simplistic in the source text. For example:

ST: Millionairess (pg 360).

TT: *Milionea wa kike* (pg 48).

There are also foreign objects which are familiar to the Swahili, for example the alcoholic spirit Brandy. Simba translates this using two distinct strategies. He swahilizes the term, thus at times it appears as *brandi*, and at other times he explicates, referring to it as '*pombe kali*' (pg 45) which means 'a strong spirit/alcohol'. There is often, as is the case in most translations where the source and target cultures are worlds apart, a tendency to explain what is referred to, thus, should one not know what is meant by Brandy, it is explained to them.

²⁰ Questionnaire handed out at Zanaki High School, Upanga, Dar es Salaam, Friday 3rd November 2006.

Simba was faced with translating expressions that are linked with time and space, most of which are foreign. Let us consider the following examples:

ST: Autumn twilight (pg 332).

TT: *Alfajiri ile ya majira ya kipupwe* (pg 17).

ST: Fog of time (pg 333).

TT: *Ukungu wa wakati* (pg 18).

ST: A gentle spring breeze (pg 366).

TT: *Upepo mwanana ubembelezao wa majira ya machipuko* (pg 52).

ST: The autumn clouds (pg 332).

TT: *Mawingu ya majira ya kipupwe* (pg 17).

Spring and winter are seasons that do not exist in tropical Tanzania; *kipupwe* can be the equivalent of autumn although unlike the European autumn, trees do not shed their leaves to be left barren. The translator has translated the term ‘spring’ with reference to it being a time of ‘sprouting’. The time of sprouting happens twice in the East coast of Tanzania and once in the interior. It does not carry with it Western notions of beauty, romance and re-birth. Similarly, although *Alfajiri* is actually dawn, this can be used to refer to the subdued light just before sunrise, before the cock crows. Simba has done a literal translation of these terms and they seem to have worked well.

Deogratias Simba intended to send his readers abroad. In his translation, he has kept the names of the characters and those of areas as they appear in the English source text. Thus the protagonist’s name is spelt *Saber* in the Swahili translation. This is a foreign structure to the Swahili who would pronounce this as ‘Sabeerr’ – stressing both the ‘e’, pronounced as ‘ae’, and pulling on the ‘r’. Adapting it into their Swahili equivalents of *Saba* or *Saberi* would have made it easier for a Swahili to read and pronounce the name. This is because Swahili proper nouns tend to end with

a vowel and not a consonant. Keeping names in their foreign form is not unique to Simba. We find for instance Mollel, who translated Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946) into *Mchimba Madini* (1980), preserved the main character's name, 'Xuma', despite the letter X being absent in Swahili. The reason may be due to the fact that the name is originally pronounced using a click sound which is also not present in Swahili. It should also be noted at this juncture that adaptations have tended to change characters' names. For instance, *Hawala ya Fedha* (1980), which is a translation that is derived from *The Money Order* (1972) by Sembene, presents the main character as Ibrahim Chande. This is a typical Swahili name. The original protagonist in the French version was Ibrahima Dieng, a Senegalese.

In Simba's case, had he wanted the Swahili to pronounce Saber properly, it may have been worth his while to offer its pronunciation in brackets. This has been done in *Uzinduzi* (2005) by Vaclav Havel, a recent translation from Czech to Swahili by Abdalla and Rettova. We find that next to the name of one of the characters, Bedrich, the translators have added the words *tamka 'bedrikh'* (pg 12) which means, 'pronounce bedrikh'. Similarly, they have also added a footnote to inform the reader that this given character has other names in other works. Such a strategy runs the risk of making the translation seem heavy and academic²¹ although at the same time, it also benefits the readers by broadening their horizons.

Friedman (2004:119) extrapolates that 'aiming to preserve the source culture by leaving names untranslated paradoxically obliterates it, by reducing all the names to the same level of difference in translation'. This argument is highly debatable since Friedman herself offers us the example of the name Adam. She presents that, in the book of Genesis, God created 'man' and as it happens in Hebrew, '*adam*' means 'man' and 'earth' is '*adamah*'. I would point out the fact that most of us have taken it

²¹ Specifically since the translation also contains a few footnotes that are political, cultural and historical.

for granted that Adam is simply the name that the Lord gave the man understood in Abrahamite religions to be the first man on earth rather than it being a general term to refer to man.

One can thus argue that preserving source culture names does not obliterate them but rather expands the scope of the target culture. Simba's strategy in regards to his preservation of the source texts names can be interpreted as a foreignizing strategy that expands and strives towards the development of Swahili. Similarly, places such as Cairo, Alexandria, Damanhour and el Manshiya amongst others and rivers such as the Nile, structures such as the Sphinx are all written down using their English structure. The normal Swahili spelling for the town Cairo is with a K and not a C, *Kairo*. Similarly Swahili alphabets do not include the letter X, Alexandria would be written *Aleksandria*. The OU in Damanhour would confuse a Swahili speaker, they wouldn't know how to pronounce this let alone the word 'Sphinx' (pg 29) which in earnest would have made the task of the Swahili reader easier had it been written down as *sfinksi*.

Preserving words in their foreign structure means that the translator is visible. When one reads the work, it is openly foreign - a translation. Venuti (2001), who discusses this translator's visibility, warns that such a strategy has the risk of offering an experience that would be so alien as to seem unreadable where the reader may simply ignore the foreign words or simply not read the book. Simba re-introduces a trend that was employed by some during the colonial period where the original English versions of the names were applied. We find for instance that Johnson in *Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani* (1929) preserves the English spellings of towns such as Edinburgh, Cape Town and Durban. I would be inclined to believe that this had been the trend because historically the Swahili had names of places and persons that they came into contact with. Thus Mozambique is referred to as Msumbiji and

Madagascar as Bukini. These are local, Swahili names for the places. Similarly, through interaction and over time, as is the case currently, they developed names for the US, the UK and many other countries.²² During the time when Johnson was translating, there was no Swahili equivalence for Edinburgh for instance, thus Johnson kept the original English version. Similarly, we find that Johnson preserved the names of characters that were themselves foreign, for instance, Mr Good becomes Bwana Good; he is simply given a Swahili title. But Johnson uses the existing Swahili equivalence for King Solomon as *Mfalme Sulemani*. This is the result of missionary endeavours who undertook a major effort in swahilizing biblical names and places. David became *Daudi*, the bible: *biblia*, Jerusalem: *Yerusalemu*, Abraham: *Ibrahimu*, Joseph: *Yusufu* and Jesus: *Yesu*.

In the post-colonial period a conscious effort was made to swahilize towards language growth. Thus, in Mariama Ba's translation of *So Long a Letter* (1981), we find that Maganga refers to the money used as '*farangi*' which translates as 'francs'. He also uses Swahili phonetics instead of the French West African ones. Thus 'Aissatou' is spelt 'Aisatu'. This was taken a step further by Amandina Lihamba who, as previously discussed, relocated the entire work from Senegal to East Africa and thus changed 'Ibrahima Dieng' to 'Ibrahim Chande'. In this respect, the foreign text is brought to the Swahili in every sense of the word.

Simba's approach should be interpreted as a trend that acknowledges and caters to the new generation which has embraced the West. Lexically, Simba is spoilt for choice but since he is translating for a generation that identifies itself with the globalized world, he echoes what can be referred to as their socialization. The youth are not only Swahili speakers but are a group that are inclined towards what can be referred to as western decadence.

²²Mazrui and Mazrui (1999) discuss the concept of swahilizing, presenting arguments by scholars who have shown that technical terms are often used internationally, having their roots in Greek and Latin.

6.7.3 Sayings

Sayings are culture specific and, thus, finding equivalence in the target culture is one of the most difficult tasks facing a translator. Consider the following example:

ST: not going on a wild-goose chase (pg 453).

TT: *si kumfukuzia bata mzinga wa porini* (pg 145).

Simba has translated this saying literally except that a ‘goose’ is *bata bukini*, while *bata mzinga* is a ‘turkey’. That said, when an English speaker hears this saying they immediately link it to the fact that the speaker is referring to the impossible. In the current Swahili translation, it comes across literally: that the speaker does not want to chase turkeys. It is unfortunate that in Swahili it sounds odd and a bit hilarious. This is because sayings carry with them the experiences of a people. Even sayings from other African cultures, such as the Acoli for instance, do not necessarily bring across the same meanings. For instance, the refrain in *Song of Lawino* by P’Bitek, ‘the pumpkin in the old homestead must not be uprooted’ (pg 41), is an Acoli proverb that is rendered literally in English. The English reader would not relate to this saying in the same manner as an Acoli reader. The latter would understand that Lawino is begging Ocol not to destroy things or discard things just for the sake of it. Thus, he should not have contempt for all things African just because they are African (P’Bitek, 1966:8). The proverb is the result of the Acoli who see pumpkins as delicacies and thus, even if one is moving from one homestead to another, there is no reason to uproot the vegetable. It can be used by another. This background information is absent to the English reader as it is to the Swahili. The Swahili translation reads: ‘*Mboga ulioota mahameni usidiriki kuung’oa*’ (pg 20), which means ‘do not undertake to uproot the pumpkin that grows by the wigwams or tents’. It is obvious that the translator, Sozigwa, put a lot of research into the translation and

tried to make the Swahili understand that the homesteads where these pumpkins grow are temporary, which means that one is inclined to uproot everything on their way to another location. Nevertheless, the pumpkin must not be uprooted. Despite this close rendering, the connotations of the proverb are much stronger to an Acoli reader than a Swahili reader. This is the result of cultural shifts.

It is for this reason that we find that many translators, for instance Mushi, tended to domesticate sayings. For instance, the latter translates ‘the near in blood, the nearer bloody’ (from Macbeth) as ‘*kikulacho ki nguoni mwako*’ which translates as ‘what ails you is in your attire’, a typical Swahili saying. In this way, the Swahili can have a direct and familiar connection with the saying. Similarly, Lihamba’s work include sayings such as ‘*ulimi hauna mfupa*’ (pg 4), meaning ‘the tongue does not have a bone’ and therefore, often words just slip out.

Simba’s translation is not devoid of familiar expressions. For instance, he translates:

ST: **Well** (pg 420).

TT: ***Aisee*** (pg 111).

Aisee is the swahilization of the English phrase ‘I say’ or it can also be ‘I see’. It is probable that the Swahili heard an Officer of the empire exclaim: ‘I say’ and then appropriated it. In Swahili this word is used as an exclamation where the equivalent can be the word ‘gosh’! It is used to call attention to what one is about to say. Consider this next example:

ST: **Oh**, the humiliation he suffered (pg 385).

TT: ***Hakyanani!*** *Unyanyasikaji huu* (pg 73).

Hakyanani is a typical Swahili expression used for exclaiming. It is derived from the oath giving phrase *Haki ya Mungu* which translates as ‘in the name of God, I swear...’ When the characters show shock or are touched from within, Simba tends to

use Swahili expressions to which his target audience would have a direct connection. This works well because the audience relates to these expressions. The insertion of familiar expressions is quite widespread. We find that for instance translators such as Kahaso and Mbwele in *Boi* (1976) inserted familiar expressions such as *hebu*, which is a prompt that means something like, ‘well then...’ This is especially important in translations that are source oriented as is Simba’s work since such inputs of domestication act as a grounding strategy for their works, especially for societies where the preferred norm of translation has been to either adapt or familiarize the foreign.

On the other hand, there are some sayings that he translates literally due to their lack of equivalence in Swahili and read very well, bringing across a fresh symbolism; this, according to Walter Bgoya,²³ is one of the main ways of enriching the language, for example:

ST: Days of wine and roses (pg 357).

TT: *siku za mvinyo na mawardi* (pg 44).

ST: Stop trying to be a poet (pg 428).

TT: *Hebu acha kua mshairi* (pg 119).

There are instances where foreignizing tends to shock initially but in due course the reader becomes enchanted by the construction. An example of this is the literal substitution of the term ‘virgin’. In Swahili, *bikira* is generally understood to refer to the ‘virginity of a maiden’, *mwanamwali*. It is a term that carries a certain degree of respect, awe and a level of taboo. Simba has used it to refer to smells and the soil amongst other references. For example:

ST: Pure Virgin smell (pg 337).

TT: *Harufu safi iliyo bikira* (pg 23).

²³ From interview with Walter Bgoya, 7th November 2006

ST: Promise of virgin land! (pg 340).

TT: *Ahadi ya ardhi bikira!* (pg 25).

This kind of translation, where foreign structures are used as the skeleton on which there is the formation of what may initially be identified as foreign but which, over time, might end up accepted, tend to play an important role in the development and growth of a language. Similarly, although not shocking, the literal, or rather word for word translations of the following examples, also play a similar role:

ST: The whirlpool of his fury (pg 439).

TT: *kimbunga cha hasira* (pg 130).

ST: a marketplace of humanity (pg 382).

TT: *soko la utu* (pg 69).

ST : a handful of dust (pg 381).

TT : *kiganja kimoja cha vumbi* (pg 68).

It is obvious that Simba's work is a site where a different culture emerges, where the Swahili can glimpse at the cultural 'other'. Staunch Swahili speakers and traditionalist may be offended by some of the renderings whereas the more liberal audience would be enchanted by the way Swahili has been stretched to carry across the experience of the foreign. As a re-emerging trend of translation, only time can tell whether this liberal way of translating will become a norm.

6.7.4 Vulgar Language

The most common stance in regards to vulgar language has been evasion. Translators have tended to omit language that was judged as anti-social. Thus we find for instance in the translation of Oyono's *Boi* (1976), Kahaso and Mbwele circumvented a number of phrases that they judged as vulgar. For example, the English translation, *House Boy* (1966), reads 'fuck his country and fuck him. It makes me sick when I

think of all the time I've been going with the uncircumcised sod' (pg 26). The Swahili translation on the other hand is extremely polite: '*aende zake pamoja na nchi yake, kila mara nasikia vibaya nikikumbuka nyakati nilizolala naye, mtu mwenye zunga*' (pg 21). Which means: let him together with his country go away, I always feel bad when I remember the times I slept with him, an uncircumcised person.

As has already been pointed out, the 1970s were a period when translations show a trend of moving away from the employment of strict conventions. Thus, there were translations that did not evade the rendering of vulgar language. One of these is Abdilatif Abdalla who translates Armah's *The Beautiful ones are not yet born* (1969) into *Wema hawajazaliwa* (1976). In his translation, Abdalla renders terms such as 'uncircumcised baboon' (pg 8) literally as '*sokwe usiyetahiriwa*' (pg 8). But at the same time, it has to be noted that, when rendered literally, some of the vulgar language does not have the same resonance as do their original English versions. For instance, 'You bloody fucking son of a bitch! Article of no commercial value' (pg 6) is rendered as '*Wewe! Mtoto wa mbwa usiyekuwa na thamani yoyote. Unadhani basi hili ni la baba yako?*' (pg 5) which translates as 'You! Child of a dog without any value. You think this is your father's bus?'

The English version is extremely vulgar. The vulgarity does not resonate in the same degree in the Swahili version. The second part of the curse 'You think this is your father's bus?' is a typical Swahili phrase used to belittle. This shows that the translators are always aware of their target culture. Thus we find that despite this presentation of vulgar language, there were limits that these translators could not transcend. For instance, Abdalla renders 'your mother's rotten cunt' (pg 8) as '*uchi wa mama yako uliooza*' (pg 8). Abdalla uses the general term for private parts 'uchi' rather than the specific term which has been used by Armah. Similar to the translators of the 1970s, Simba does not substitute vulgar language. He deviates from what can

be considered the norm of most Swahili translators and in doing so, he certainly pushes the borders of conformity. The reason for his non-conformity lies in the fact that he is translating for an audience that has been exposed to everything foreign, especially American decadence, films, clothing and music. An audience that would probably find what is termed in this thesis as vulgar language, their everyday language. For example:

ST: What an **ass** you are (pg 357).

TT: *Hayawani kabisa wewe* (pg 44).

ST: **Whores, pimps, bastards**, and many other choice varieties (pg 368).

TT: *Malaya, makuadi, wanaharamu, na aina nyingine kedekede za mtindo huo* (pg 55).

Simba does not recoil from translating vulgar language overtly. He does not conform to the norms that dictate the fact that it is not considered appropriate to utter words such as *Malaya* in the open. He presents the direct equivalents of the English terms; *Hayawani* means a brute, as does the term ‘ass’. ‘Whores’, ‘pimps’ and ‘bastards’ are all given their equivalence. Interestingly, some Swahili would not be able to stomach, let alone appreciate, such terms exposed so openly. In this light, it is doubtful whether this reading could become part of the school syllabi. If it were, then it would be part of the literature for silent reading as opposed to being read aloud in class. We find that, for instance, in translating *Boi* (1976), Kahaso and Mbwele render the word ‘mistress of the agricultural engineer’ (pg 26) as ‘*mjakazi mwafrika wa Mhandisi wa kilimo*’ (pg 21), *Mjakazi* is ‘a female slave’. They only make it apparent that the lady in question is the given officer’s lover through the conversation that she has with Toundi, the main character in the novel. The direct equivalence of the word ‘mistress’ as it is meant in this case is ‘*hawara*’. The translators did not use the given

word because it carries with it the same derogatory connotations as words such as ‘prostitute’ and ‘pimps’ do in Swahili. Consider another example:

ST: He had always assumed that he was the product of a moment of pleasure in any one of the numerous brothels. **A bastard.** (pg 332).

TT: *Aliwahi kuwaza kwamba alikua tunda la faragha Fulani ya starehe katika moja ya madanguro kadhaa. **Shenzi!*** (pg 17).

Shenzi means ‘uncouth’ or ‘uncivilized’. Although these are all the unfortunate connotations of one who is supposed to be a bastard, Simba does not relate the word *shenzi* to being a bastard but rather to what made Saber believe that he was a bastard. Simba does not translate ‘bastard’ literally, although he does so in other instances. In this example, the overall impression is that the sentence prior to the word *Shenzi* explicitly points out that Saber had always believed himself to be a bastard, thence, for stylistic reasons, Simba uses a term that shows the anger within the character. According to Toury (1995),

A translator always has more than one option at his or her disposal. However, it is not the case that all these options are equally available, given the constraints imposed by the target culture....rather they tend to be *hierarchically ordered*. Of course, a translator may also decide to work *against* the order offered him/her by the target literary-cultural constellation (Toury, 1995:163).

Simba can be said to be working against the order offered to him although, it is more right to note that, through the examination of the strategies employed by Simba in tackling the English translation, he is re-introducing the trend that was quite prevalent in the 70’s. This trend disappeared in the 1980’s and 1990’s, not because it was relegated but rather, as pointed out in the Introduction, because only a few translations were undertaken during that time, there was a vacuum. Literature as it was known prior to that period and as it is currently known simply disappeared. People who are busy looking for the source of their next rationing for food and other basic needs rarely write.

The strategies employed by Simba do face the prospect of getting rebuked from some quarters, especially from the conservative quarters where traditional customs and norms are upheld. But, despite the fact that conservative quarters may revoke and be offended by some of the terms used in modern translations, this does not seem to deter other Swahili translators where recently renderings that would have been considered almost taboo seem to be popular. An example of this can be seen in the translation by Imani Swilla, a lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam, who has translated a Guinean children's book titled *Mvulana Aliyewakojolea kuku* (2004) – the boy who urinated on chickens. This is from the French book by Yves Pinguilly and Sarang Seck titled *Le garçon qui mouillait les poules* (2001) which means 'the boy who wet the chickens'. Swilla's title aims at humour but also throws all caution to the winds. Although the boy in question, Diidi, does urinate on the given chickens, nevertheless the French version refers to wetting of the chickens and not the crude act of urinating as does Swilla's translation.

Part of Swahili children's socialization is learning that one should not utter words that describe what they do in the lavatory. It is considered indecent. One simply says, *naenda msalani* which means 'I am going to the lavatory', in some quarters even the usage of the word *chooni* which is the literal rendering of 'toilet' is considered improper. Thus Swilla's title, especially since the targeted audience are children, reinforces the idea that Swahili translators are currently trying to break the mould.

6.8 Swahili Children's Literature in Translation

During the pre-colonial period, Swahili literature intended for children was oral. It was part and parcel of children's socialization. Thus riddles, tales and legends were recounted to the younger generation by their elders. Tales from *The Nights* for

instance were recounted with a number of adaptations to fit the Swahili milieu. This custom of adapting has continued over the centuries and even to date, tales are adjusted to the present so as to suit the surroundings of the modern child.

In the West, the divide between translation and adaptation dates back to the times of Cicero. The strategy was at its peak in the 17th and 18th centuries at a time when *The Nights* were first translated by Antoine Galland. This was the time of the *belles infideles* (Bastin, 2001:7), literally ‘beautiful but not faithful’, where free translations were carried out. Some scholars regard this strategy as distortion. For instance Bastin (2001:5) points out that ‘adaptation may be understood as a set of translative operations which result in a text that is not accepted as a translation but is nevertheless recognized as representing a source text...’ According to the latter, adaptation has been referred to as being parasitic on historical concepts of translation.

Despite the negative connotations carried by this strategy, it needs to be remembered that adaptations do involve a level of faithful rendering and also a certain amount of creativity. Amongst the number of procedures that can be classified as modes of adaptation include: transcription of the original, creation, omission, expansion, updating, situational equivalence, exoticism and creation (ibid, 7). The Swahili have used all these ways of adapting, apart from exoticism and updating which are prevalent in the translation of Swahili literatures into foreign languages rather than vice versa.²⁴ These adaptive strategies are also pragmatic changes and have thus shown how language has been used to interpret the Swahili context.

There are a number of factors that have led to Swahili translators choosing adaptation as a strategy. Among those that apply to the specific case of Swahili, it seems that the main reason for adapting and change discourse during the colonial period was ‘genre switching’. For instance, as seen in this work, translators such as

²⁴ See the translation of Adam Shafi’s *Kasri ya Mwinyi Fuad* into *Les girofliers de Zanzibar* (the cloves of Zanzibar). The title implies a portrayal of Zanzibar’s somehow exotic life, although the contents could not be further from that.

Johnson and Brenn among several others had the task of switching adult literature into children's which entailed what Bastin (2001) refers to as 'a global re-creation of the original text'. Thus the works were abridged and language was made simpler. Another reason was 'situational inadequacy' where 'the context referred to in the original text does not exist in the target culture'. In the post-colonial period the 'cross-code breakdown', which happens when 'there are simply no lexical equivalents in the target language', and situational equivalence were the main reason for adaptation. (Bastin, 2001:7)

Children's literature was rendered in the written form during the colonial period. Colonial government and missionary schools introduced children's literature through books such as *Elisi katika Nchi ya Ajabu* (1940) and *Hadithi za Esopo* (1942). In fact, most of the written literature during the colonial period comprised translations intended for a young audience. It needs to be noted that the colonial state tried to emphasize the fact that written literature is much more mature and civilized compared to oral literature which was seen as primitive.

Toury (1995) discusses the transference of items from one polysystem to another and advances that:

it is a major goal, and a workable task for the Polysystem theory, to deal with the particular conditions under which a certain culture may be interfered with by another culture, as a result of which repertoires²⁵ are transferred from one polysystem to another (Even-Zohar 2005:9).

At this point, we can already discern that some of the conditions for the Swahili polysystem to have been 'interfered' by the British polysystem include the need that the colonial educational system had for suitable children literature. As has been argued in the previous chapters, since the experience portrayed in the foreign books was thought to be alien due to the Western background and values contained within,

²⁵ A repertoire is 'the aggregate of rules and materials which govern both the making and handling or production and consumption of any given product' (1997:20).

various strategies were employed by the translators, some of them being the strategies of domestication and adaptation.

In the immediate post-colonial period, reading was emphasized for youths and adults. Translations were undertaken with adults as the targeted audience. The aim was to eradicate illiteracy within the masses. The content of what was taught was not only propaganda materials that fit the state ideology but there was also translation in the form of adaptations. Thus one finds that for instance, students in primary schools recited the following:²⁶

*Tumeizika elimu, elimu ya kizamani
elimu ile haramu, maana ya kikoloni
Imetuishia hamu, kuiga ya ugenini
Elimu yetu ya sasa yawafaa wananchi.*

Gloss: We have buried the education, the ancient education, the impure education, because it was colonial, Gone in us is the taste of aping the foreign, Our current education befits the people/masses.

Simultaneously there were adaptations of tales by Aesop; one such tale is the tale of ‘The Fox and the Grapes’ where upon failing to reach a bunch of grapes that hung up high on a vine tree, the fox denies his true desire of wanting to eat them exclaiming ‘The grapes are sour anyway’. In the Swahili version, the fox has been transformed into a rabbit and the fruits can be of any sort. Students recited this poem titled ‘*Sizitaki mbichi hizi*’ meaning ‘I do not want these raw ones’ and the first stanza reads:

*Hadithi inayokuja, ni ya sungura sikia
hadithi uliyongoja leo ninakuletea
Alitoka siku moja njaa aliposikia
njaa aliposikia sungura nakuambia* (Tujifunze Lugha yetu, 1971:12).

Gloss: Listen to the following story of the rabbit; today I bring you a story that you have awaited; One day, hungry, he went out; when he felt hunger, the Rabbit, I am telling you.

²⁶ I memorized this stanza in 1984 and it is still fresh in my mind.

The poem describes the rabbit's trip into the bushes. He finds a tree full of ripened fruits and tries to get them, to no avail. In the last stanza, the rabbit gives up and laments:

*Sizitaki mbichi hizi, sungura akagumia
naona nafanya kazi bila faida kujua
yakamtoka machozi matunda akalilia
Matunda akalilia Sungura nakuambia* (ibid).

Gloss: I do not want these raw ones, groaned Rabbit; I am toiling without knowing the prospects; he shed tears crying for fruits; he cried for the fruits, the Rabbit, I am telling you.

Aesop's fable has been re-written and adapted into a *ngonjera*. *Ngonjera* is a poem that is sung out loud by at least two people who alternate. Thus the adaptation is made to suit a historically African genre, the oral, while narrating a content that has a foreign source. This kind of adaptation did not acknowledge its source.

It is not until fairly recently that translations of children's books have been perceived as important. The huge dip in levels of literacy from 91% at the time when Nyerere stepped down to the present when it is 69%,²⁷ has affected the production of literary materials and similarly the status of translation in Tanzania. The Soviet block tried to fill this gap through Russian works such as *Bustani ya Wanyama* (1987) which means 'the garden of animals', by Samuil Marshak translated by Abdul Rahim Hamdani and *Jua Lililoibwa* (1989) by Kornei Chukovski also translated by Hamdani. Nevertheless, this did not fill the gap. According to Demere Kitunga, from E&D Publishing, it is this literary inadequacy that has been a major factor in the lack of a reading culture in Tanzania. The young and the youth only read their text-books while adults read newspapers; the local market did not supply any children's literature unless it was part of the school syllabi. This argument is a reiteration of Ohly's (1981:8) who advanced that critics tended to offer the most reviews to authors such as Shaaban Robert, Abdulla and Katalambula because 'they belong to school

²⁷ See From http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/SUB-SAHARAN_AFRICA/United_Republic_of_Tanzania/United_Republic_of_Tanzania.htm

reading lists'. To date, the authors whose work is not part of the educational system are rarely reviewed.²⁸

Throughout history, Swahili children have had oral tales narrated to them in the home setting. There have also been regular radio programmes introduced by the state to try and keep this tradition. These programmes include a famous one titled *Mama na Mwana*²⁹ which used to be narrated by Deborah Mwenda. She captivated a young audience with folktales and stories from all over the world, adapted for the Swahili audience. The tales recounted in this programme include a number of translations that were hugely domesticated; for instance, Beauty and the Beast was titled *Ua Jekundu* which means 'red flower'. This might be derived from the 'white' rose that Beauty's father picks for his daughter. Other famous stories are *Mbalamwezi Nyota Begani*, *Siri binti Mfalme*, *Mfalme Kigongo* which were all adaptations from oriental tales; *Hadithi ya Mtoto wa Mfalme na Chura* which was an adaptation of the frog prince.

6.9 Modern Children's Translations

During this past decade, the language and culture discussions in Tanzania³⁰ led to different consensus. One of these is that, since children learn better when taught through their mother-tongue, then the material that they use ought to reflect this. Publishers including Kitunga and Lema of E&D together with Walter Bgoya of Mkuki na Nyota argue that Swahili youths and children would benefit more if they had the opportunity to read books of an African background with African cultural values alongside foreign literatures. Armed with this belief, Ms Kitunga informed me

²⁸ See conclusion chapter.

²⁹ I was one of the young children who, from 2pm to 2.30, would sit by the radio with my grandmother and would not bulge for any reason whatsoever. Many of those who grew up in the 80s and 90s look back at this programme with nostalgia.

³⁰ See chapter one.

that she struggled to get some funds towards projects that aim at the eradication of illiteracy in children and at introducing a reading culture.³¹

The belief is that efforts need to be pumped at from the grassroots level; children need to grow up having acquired a reading culture. Thus E&D and Mkuki na Nyota have taken the initiative of publishing children's tales that offer the Swahili versions simultaneously with the English translation. The director of Mkuki na Nyota, Walter Bgoya has spearheaded the initiative by writing children's books and translating them himself. These include *Hadithi ya Kunguru na Chura Mzee* (2002), translated as *The Story of the Crow and the Frog* (2002), where the two animals hold a racing competition to decide who could be the fastest. The frog wins showing that even the weak and smaller animals can be heroes. This theme is derived from the famous folktale which is also one of Aesop's fables, about the race between the hare and the tortoise. Another tale written by Bgoya is *Kinyonga Mdogo Ambaye Hakuweza Kubadili Rangi Yake* (2003), translated as *The Chameleon Who Could not Change her Colour* (2003), a story that was inspired from traditional tribal tales whose theme is similar to the story above; the weak are actually very strong. Out of 38 chameleon siblings who could all change their colours so as to protect themselves from snakes and other dangers, there is one who could not and was thus seen to be at a disadvantage. As fate would have it, he ends up rescuing his family from danger. Another tale by the same author is *Hadithi ya Katope Mtoto aliyeundwa kwa Udongo Mwekundu* (2004) translated as *The story of Katope: Boy from the Dark Brown Earth* (2004), which is a tale about a young boy named Katope, which means 'small mud' in Swahili. He is created from the dark brown earth by a childless old couple. The story follows the boy who must always shy away from the rain for fear of melting. This theme is similar to that of the Gingerbread man. The last story by Bgoya is

³¹ Interviewed in Dar es Salaam on the 7th November 2006.

Hadithi ya Kunguru na Kaa (2004) translated as *The Story of the Crow and the Crab* (2004), which is an amusing tale about a wise crab by the sea shore who is fought over by two crows who want to eat him.

Apart from these tales which appear in bilingual editions, Mkuki na Nyota has re-published stories such as *The Little Black fish* by Samad Behrangi (1939-1968), which was translated by Ebrahim Hussein as *Samaki Mdogo Mweusi*, a tale that is currently out of print. Other tales that have foreign origins are Hassan Adam's adaptation of Alibaba and the forty thieves as *Alibaba na Majangili Arobaini* (2004). E&D, Publishers who advertise themselves as a mainly educational publishing house, has a list of what it classifies as juvenile literature as well as adult fiction. Among the juvenile collection are works that have been written, created and translated within the publishing house. A good example of this is *Ndoto ya Upendo* (2001), written and translated as *Upendo's Dream* (2004) by Elieshi Lema, co-owner of the publishing house. It has also produced a number of creations and translations by Nadir Tharani who also does his own Picasso-like images, making the books quite colourful. Tharani's works include *Red in the Sky* (2001), translated by Demere Kitunga as *Wekundu Angani* (2001), and *Raha Zambarau/Purple Pleasure* (2005), created and translated by Tharani.

I believe that there is currently a trend in Tanzania where Western tales are appropriated and used to create African tales. It is actually a norm where there happens a 'more global replacement of the original text with a text that preserves only the essential message/ideas/functions of the original' (Bastin, 2001:7). This norm was initiated and quite prevalent during the colonial period where we find a number of Swahili tales that are non-arguably linked to the orient. Among the famous Swahili creations of this type are the tales of *Abunuwas* and *Hawala ya Fedha* which have both been discussed in this study.

Initially the norm of creation was the result of a polysystem that was establishing itself. Thus we find that the oral knowledge of the local people was written down as Swahili. It was appropriated and then created to fit the Swahili milieu. We find that this norm is now resurfacing since the Swahili polysystem has resurfaced from a period where there were no literary alternatives. It is now re-establishing itself; therefore, we find that once again, what was known orally is being presented as domestic and created as such.

6.9.1 Modern Creations: *Ndoto ya Upendo*

Ndoto ya Upendo (2001) translated as *Upendo's Dream* (2004), was written and translated by Ms Elieshi Lema, co-owner and editor of E&D Publishing Ltd; it is part of the books that were created for *Mradi wa vitabu vya watoto*, 'children's books project'. Its theme is one that calls upon society to educate girls. Upendo is a girl who dreams of going to school but is made to stay at home with an infant sibling because her parents are too poor to send her to school. Nevertheless, her brother, Yona, is sent to school, bringing into question the issue of gender inequality in Tanzania. Upendo, which means 'love' in Swahili, hides one of her brother's text-books and through it learns how to write; she loves writing. But she does not know what she is writing and cannot keep track of her development nor compare her work with that of her age mates since she writes on the bare ground. Then, in a dream, everything is revealed to her. She sees the wind, a dove, a chatterer and a snake tell her that the secret in learning how to read and write lies in power, knowledge and demand, unfortunately these terms are not defined in the book therefore we take them simply as empowering terms. The next day she goes to school and informs the teachers that she seeks power and knowledge. The tale ends with Upendo running home and meeting the wind,

dove, chatterer and snake who tell her about rights, power and victory. Then the audience is asked whether they think that Upendo will be able to go to school.

It is obvious that this story is targeted at gender empowerment and equality where the masses are conscientized about educating girls. The gender aspect in the story is quite strong which makes the book a heavy reading for children, it reads almost like propaganda material. In the same breath, the inclusion of some aspects of oral story telling such as songs do lighten the mood especially since the songs are definitely meant for children. The words to one song are: ‘beautiful letters, like flowers, beautiful numbers, like stars, give me the secret, you gave my brother’ (pg 18).

The translation is target oriented and is sensitive to the Swahili milieu and its language. Interestingly, this goes as far as the production of Swahili sounding English. Consider the following example:

ST: *We mtoto **unayechungulia wenzako**, njoo* (pg 30).

TT: You girl **peeping at others**, Come (pg 30).

This phrase makes perfect sense in Swahili but in English, the use of the word ‘peeping’ gives a perverted impression. Nevertheless, since the author/translator is targeting the Swahili, the use of the word ‘peeping’ sounds very normal.

Similarly, some of the lullabies are typically Swahili where a lot of scare-mongering is used. For instance one lullaby goes:

Do not cry, beautiful children, the terrible hawk may hear you
And steal your voices and take it to the ghost that eats people
Your mother will be so lonely without you (pg 5).

Lema has also inserted children’s games that are specifically Swahili. For instance, *rede*. This game is not explained since the targeted audience, the Swahili children from Tanzania are familiar with this ball game.

There are also children's translations that are meant for very small children. For instance, Tharani's *Purple Pleasure* (2005), uses bold and colourful images intended to tease children's imaginations. The storyline is very simple. It is a tale about the colour purple travelling around making purple music notes, landing on a woman's lips who then kisses her child making the latter smile through the night. This book is targeted at inducing little Swahili children into enjoying books.

Apart from these new creations, there has also been appropriation of foreign tales into Swahili. This includes fairy tales such as *Cinderella* and *The Frog Prince*, *Snow White* and *Pinnocchio* among others.

6.9.2 Modern Folktales: *Sinderella*

Cinderella (1697) is one of the world's most popular fairytales with hundreds of versions. The attraction to this tale is the result of its dealing with the issue of good fighting evil and, in the end, the oppressed triumph.

The most popular version of *Cinderella* was written by Charles Perrault (1628-1703) in 1697. He also laid the foundations for a number of fairy tales such as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Puss in Boots*. His *Cinderella* tale is the one that contains glass slippers, a fairy godmother, a pumpkin and mice. Over time, many versions of this tale have been undertaken; Michael N. Salda,³² editor of the Grummond Children's Literature Research Collection from the University of Southern Mississippi presents the full versions of twelve. Thence the appropriation of this tale by the Swahili is simply an extension of what has become the norm.

The Swahili *Cinderella* has tried to retain some of the common features of the many variants. It is not advertised as a translation but rather the creative work of R. Moshi (2003). It is a small book that is part of *Mradi wa vitabu vya watoto Tanzania*,

³² <http://www.usm.edu/english/fairytales/cinderella/cinderella.html>

‘the children’s book project in Tanzania’. It is published by an educational publisher known as Mture Educational publishers. The Swahili version is titled *Sinderela* (2003). The first thing that one notices about Sinderela is that she is a modern African girl. On the other hand, the Prince and the King look like they have appeared out of African history books. They are both attired in animal skins and long gladiator type of sandals. These are the traditional African royal garments and they include leopard and lion skins together with masks. These images can be interpreted as re-appropriated since they are the very same images that poets such as Senghor defended many decades ago since they were cause for mockery by colonial powers throughout history.

Sinderella and her step sisters wear modern knee-length dresses and high-heeled shoes. The evil step-mother is attired in an outfit made from the *kitenge* cloth with matching head gear. The step-sisters go on a three-day diet to lose weight so that the shoe may fit them. These characters are familiar to the modern readers who can recognize gadgets such as mirrors, sinks, taps, tiles and glass windows on the book. Therefore there is a shift between the prince and the modern world in which he inhabits. This might have been purposely done to capture the ideal of a traditional African prince for which little African girls can dream of.

This version has retained the glass slippers, and the mice although the pumpkin has been appropriated into a melon. The image of the carriage is presented in the shape of a thatched roof African hut. The ball takes place on two different days, as it was in Perrault’s version. The fairy godmother has taken the form of an ancestor of Sinderella who had died a long time ago:

ST: *Ghafla akatokea mama mmoja kutoka kwenye mawingu. Akamwambia Sinderela ‘usiogope mimi ni bibi yako wa zamani’*(pg 10).

Gloss: Suddenly there appeared a woman from the clouds. She told Cinderella ‘**fear not, I am your grandmother from long ago**’.

This case of domestication was inevitable because of two factors,

1. The concept of a fairy Godmother does not exist in Swahili
2. Usage of the nearest equivalent or foreignizing the term would have alienated part of the audience. This is because ‘Godmother’ is the equivalence of *Mama wa ubatizo* which means ‘baptism mother’, thence it is a Christian notion. On the other hand, if the translator had used the term *malaika*, an Abrahamic concept that refers to angels, it would have portrayed a completely different meaning.

A fairy godmother is a mentor or simply a godparent who possesses magical powers. These are the powers of the African ancestors; they guide and act as mentors from the other side. Interestingly, whenever she uses her magic wand, the words *pap pap pap* are mentioned. These recall the action of hitting a stick on to something and is a reference to the characteristics of the oral in African storytelling. Thus, psychologically, the reader makes implicit connections with storytelling.

Also, the term *Bibi*, which literally means grandmother, has direct connotations with ancestors. For instance, in the olden days, National Parks were called *Shamba la Bibi* which means, ‘grandmother’s farm’, to refer to their ancestral heritage. This meant that all the people have equal rights towards them.

Another interesting addition to this story is the names of the evil step-sisters. In this modern Swahili version, they have been named, *Magori* and *Bweteka* which are typical female names from the mainland. These contrast sharply with the Swahili coastal names that have often been used in children’s literature. These have often been names such as *Juma* and *Fatuma*, which have a rhythmic pattern. Thus this work is embedded in the physical milieu and psychological context of the modern Tanzanian Swahili speakers.

In the same context, this kind of translation can be interpreted as a kind of pseudo-translation since it does not refer to any source text. It can also be interpreted as a site for resistance and re-appropriation. And it seems that, currently, this is a trend in Swahili translations where, for instance, *The Frog Prince* by the Brothers Grimm's Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm has been translated by Collins Mdachi into *Binti Mfalme na Chura* (2003) which means 'The princess and the frog'. Similar to *Sinderela* (2003), there is no reference to the original. This Swahili version offers both the Swahili and its own English translation.

It is a tale about a spoiled princess dropping a golden ball into a pond where a frog takes it out for her with the promise of befriending her. The Princess does so reluctantly, but after a series of events, the frog magically transforms into a handsome prince. In the original version, the frog turned into a Prince after a spell was broken when the princess, disgusted by the frog, threw it against a wall. In modern versions the transformation happens after the princess kisses the frog.

The Swahili version of this tale has embraced literary borrowing and imitation but has largely appropriated the tale. The images are distinctly African, reminding one of Makonde tribal masks. There is simultaneous translation where each page contains the Swahili version, an image and then its English translation. Interestingly, the English translation only offers the gist of the story and is far from what one would term 'faithful' rendering. Consider the following example:

Swahili: *Mara alimwona ndege mzuri akielekea porini, akamwonyesha mpira wake kwa maringo. Binti Mfalme alitaka kumtamanisha huyo ndege ili acheze naye. Ndege aliruka juu zaidi na akaenda mbali kwa sababu hakupenda maringo ya Binti mfalme. Binti Mfalme alirusha mpira wake juu ili umfikie yule ndege. Lakini kwa bahati mbaya mpira ulidondoka kwenye bwawa. Binti Mfalme alijaribu kuutoa, lakini kila alipougusa ulizidi kudidimia na hatimaye ukazama* (pg 4).

English: She saw a lovely bird and she wanted to play with it. As she tossed the ball into the air, it went right into the pond that was nearby. She tried to get it out of the water without success (pg 4).

The action in the English version is extremely simplified. There is no mention of the princess showing off to the bird, the bird not being impressed by her actions. The ball is said to have just sunk whereas in the Swahili version it is explained that as the princess tried to touch the ball it sank further and further. The Swahili version uses the language of story telling whereas that is not the case in the English version.

This may have been done on purpose as the main intention was probably to appropriate a foreign tale, make it Swahili. It may also be that, since the children's book project is still at its embryonic stage and children are taught in Swahili, their level of English would not permit them to follow a complicated narration.

Whatever the translator's intentions, the fact remains that there seems to be a trend in Tanzania where foreign tales are appropriated. This recalls the colonial era where Arabic tales were appropriated by the Swahili and then recounted as Swahili tales. Similarly, in the late 1970s some writers adapted foreign works, presenting these as though they were Swahili. This is the case of *Hawala ya fedha* (1980).³³

6.10 Analysis

Within the Tanzanian Swahili polysystem, there seems to be an overall preference for domestication.³⁴ This means that the strategy has been embraced as an acceptable rather than an adequate trend.³⁵ Initially this was due to the influence of scholars such as Aidarus asserting their personal presence in their works.³⁶ Later on this took the shape of the colonial administrative effort to 'educate' the African. In both instances,

³³ See above.

³⁴ Albeit foreignization being employed as well. See previous chapters.

³⁵ According to Toury (1995), the choice undertaken by translators in regards to the initial norm lead the product to be either adequate or acceptable in the receiving culture. Through conformity to the culture of the receiving audience, the initial norm determines the adequacy and acceptability of a translation. A translation that leans towards the target culture would be perceived as acceptable whereas, should a translator choose to subject himself to the norms of the source text and thence to the source culture, their work would be adequate. This kind of work would often 'entail certain incompatibilities with target norms and practices, especially those lying beyond the mere linguistic ones' (Toury, 1995:56).

³⁶ See chapter one.

it was judged imperative to introduce the foreign in a domesticated form. With post-colonialism, domestication took the form of appropriation and translators tried to prove their worth as well as that of their language and culture in bringing across the foreign in a familiar way. Similarly, the current practice of assimilating children's classics can be understood as part of the Swahili translators attempts to re-define the relationship between translations and the modern cultural and socio-political sphere.

Domesticating translations translate foreign texts in their own terms. This means that, at times, cultural differences end up being effaced.³⁷ This is what has happened with the re-appropriated modern children's literature. The plot, characters and structure of these children's tales are Swahili. For instance, they rely on oral devices which require the active participation of readers or listeners; *Sinderela* is a Swahili girl; Brenn's 1973 revised edition of *The Nights* presents images that are completely African or Swahili for that matter. Interestingly, the original oriental images have currently been recycled by Adam whose strategy can be interpreted as reclaiming of the Swahili oriental roots or rebuking *uzawa*, 'the Bantu / African ethnicity'. These creators are more concerned with the effect of the Swahili text on the audience rather than solely conveying the meaning. The trend in this kind of translation is therefore, to convey an authentic African discourse from a foreign source.

We also find that, although translators such as Johnson, Brenn, Adam, Nyerere and Mushi did not uproot the works of *The Nights* and Shakespeare respectively, nevertheless, they too tended to use other forms of domesticating and adaptation so that a familiar context replaced the original foreign one. To this end they have employed strategies such as omission and situational equivalence.

³⁷ See Robinson (1997).

Studies that are similar to the current one have been carried out in Francophone West Africa and it seems that there are similarities between translation trends in Francophone West Africa and in Tanzania. For instance, Charmaine Young (2009:110-135), explores the translation of aspects of Senegalese culture in Sembene Ousmane's translations. She finds out that the translation of *Les Bouts de Bois de Dieu* (1960) into *God's Bits of Wood* (1970) by Price uses the following strategies:

Literal translation in order to render the Senegalese culture, cultural substitution to enable the target audience to encounter the cultural aspects in the ST in a meaningful manner; loan words to ensure that the reader is immersed in a world of foreign symbols and practices, and translation couplets (loanword plus paraphrase) in order to transfer foreign element in a manner accessible to the target audience (Young, 2009:131).

Through the above quoted strategies, the English audience explores the Senegalese culture. Similarly, Wake who translates Sembene's *Xala* (1974), also achieves this 'cultural compromise' which then releases the Senegalese culture although he also uses paraphrase and cultural substitution to explain concepts and events that are too foreign which otherwise would isolate the reader (ibid). On the other hand, Schwartz who translated Sembene's *Black Docker* (1974), is much more target oriented. In this light, Young (2006) advances that, the translator 'often opts for loanword plus footnotes, domestication of functional equivalent in the translation of cultural items and the substitution of the French and Senegalese culture by a British one through the use of typically British expressions, settings and ideas' (ibid).

Young (2006) criticizes the fact that Schwartz' strategies 'are generally in contrast to the balanced strategies utilized by Price (1970) and Wake (1976)'. The fact that he domesticates the translation and makes it British, is seen as an act of reinforcing the status quo where the work's Africanness is almost deleted from the text. Young's observations echo the experience that has been undertaken by Swahili translators. In this light, one may question whether the domesticating of the following characters and events reinforce the Swahili status quo too: for instance the complete

adaptation and domestication of Sembene's *Le Mandat* (1965) into a Swahili drama taking place in a Swahili town as seen in *Hawala ya Fedha* (1980), the domesticating of Alice from *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), Abunuwas from *The Nights* and even the fact that Shylock from *The Merchant of Venice* seems to converse as though he were an Omani or Yemen trader in Zanzibar rather than a Jew in Venice.

Nevertheless, the Swahili society and its language are in constant evolution while remaining embedded in older traditions. Therefore, there has been room for translators such as Simba to deviate from the norm and only domesticate sparingly. This situation is discussed by Toury (1995) when he points out that possible deviations from what is considered the norm do not pre-empt the existence of norms; rather, deviations occur at the risk of sanctions on the part of society. Which means that, the fact that Simba has deviated from domesticating does not annul the given norm. Simba's work has not been sanctioned and he is in fact looking forward to translating Mahfouz's *Children of Gebelaawi* (1959) which was banned in Egypt as it was considered to be anti religious. Evidently, as a parable of God, Satan, Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, the reception of such a book among the Swahili might be controversial. The Swahili are sensitive to culture and religion, therefore translating such a highly controversial work would measure the levels of tolerance and acceptability in Swahili translations. Through *Msako* (2004), Simba has managed to push the borders but the theme of his work has been largely moralistic. The reception has been good since the symbolic existential nature of the work is not really emphasized.

Simba's strategy reinforces the idea that foreignization is inevitable, especially since translation brings across the experience of the foreign, and at times, the only way to understand foreign concepts is through the original imagery. It is this latter point of view that seems to have driven the recent phenomenon that is visible in

Simba's wholesale aggressive presentation of the foreign. Simba translates literally and directly, giving the impression that his work is foreign. His is a foreignizing translation which 'has meant a close adherence to the foreign text, a literalism that resulted in the importation of foreign cultural forms and the development of heterogeneous dialects and discourses' (Venuti, 2001:242).

Interestingly, when asked about this large scale importation of foreign concepts, Simba informed me that in translating *Msako* (2004), his strategy was '*kujaribisha kuvaa viatu vya Mahfouz kwa kufanya tafsiri hii ya kwanza katika Lugha ya Kiswahili*',³⁸ which literally means, 'putting himself in Mahfouz's shoes in trying to do his first translation into Swahili'. His answer is a literal Swahili translation of an English saying. It is unquestionable that Simba has appreciated and internalized a large number of foreign literary concepts. He is the product of a globalized Tanzania, the new generation and probably the future of Swahili translation. His work is validated as a mode of translation designed to retain and assert difference and diversity by sticking closely to the contours of the source text. It shows a clear departure from the past conservative translations that were steeped in the Swahili lingo-cultural milieu.

Polysystem theory makes it evident that any given society has trends of translation norms that are actually the result of changes in society which may be initiated by translators, translation schools, translation criticism and ideology.³⁹ Thus, at given times three different sets of norms may co-exist in societies which are the mainstream norms, traces of previous norms, and rudiments of new ones. In the case of Tanzania, it seems that that domesticating, specifically through adaptation, situational equivalence and omission has occupied a central position since the inception of translation in Tanzania. Adaptation has manifested itself as the norm of

³⁸ Interview held at Mkuki na Nyota offices, Dar es Salaam, 8th November 2006.

³⁹ As previously discussed in chapter one, also see Toury (1998).

acceptability which has been employed by a good number of translators. These include Aidarus, Brenn, Johnson, St Lo De Malet, Nyerere, Mushi and even most recently by Adam. Although Nyerere and Adam aimed at faithful rendering, they too have adapted. Nyerere did so through his appropriation of Shakespeare and Adam has done it through his reclaiming of the past Swahili language and culture. At the same time, this norm of adaptation is being reinforced in the new children's translations. This translation convention has been determined by the values of the society, the patronage, the whole universe of Swahili discourse which also involves issues of censure and taboo.

In the Swahili context, traces of previous norms are the same as rudiments of new norms. These are the foreignizing norms that were initiated in the 1970s by translators such as Paul Sozigwa. They are the norms of adequacy. With the changing society and globalization, they are now employed by emerging translators such as Simba. The new norms should enrich the Swahili culture with new elements and modern ways of viewing the world.

It seems that the acceptance and role of the future norms of translations in the Swahili polysystem will be reflected through the struggle between the global and the local. In light of today's global world, this will determine whether domestication or foreignization will proceed as the main norm or whether these two strategies will balance each other out and be integral and influential in the make-up of the Swahili translation product.

7. CHAPTER SEVEN

Concluding Remarks

This study has focused on the significance of Swahili translation in Tanzania. It has explained its evolution, its functions and the different events that have led to its current position in the Swahili polysystem. An analysis of the norms and the reasons that have led to their existence have been explored. Swahili translations have claimed cultural authority in different epochs in Tanzania. This study has also presented and analysed various Swahili case studies. It is evident that processes of assimilation and appropriation have been vital in the development of Swahili translations, just as they have been in its literature. Translators have had to deal with a number of issues including cultural shifts and lack of lexical equivalents. To counteract such hurdles, strategies ranging from what I have coined as short-circuiting to situational equivalence, explication and literal renderings have been employed. Similarly, it appears that a majority of translators needed and still need extra-linguistic skills and competence in order to contextualize almost all situations during the process of translating in Swahili since they are regularly faced with acculturation problems.

Through this study it became evident that Even-Zohar's (1990) hypothesis that, the more a cultural system is peripheral to the central system, the less its tendency towards self sufficiency. This is clearly reflected in the Swahili polysystem. Swahili system during colonialism depended on the colonial British system and at that time, Swahili prose, which was largely made up of translations, more or less mirrored the tastes of what the British Empire perceived as adequate for the colony. Needless to say, the Swahili polysystem was guided by the British polysystem. This interference led to translation, particularly from English into Swahili, being crucial in the formation of Swahili literature as it shaped the centre of the polysystem.

Translation was the principal source of Swahili prose, acting as the agent for introducing new and different genres. It is only a decade or so after the country's independence that translations were relegated to their current peripheral position in the Swahili polysystem. Even-Zohar's (1990) supposition that, translated literature is a distinct system within a certain literary polysystem, often operating in the periphery of this polysystem is very relevant for Swahili now. Unfortunately, with publishing houses producing only a maximum of two to three translations a year, Swahili translation has definitely slid to the periphery. Subsequently, the role that translation plays in current publishing of Tanzanian prose is marginal.

Since translation was central in the formation of Swahili literature during the colonial epoch, it automatically occupied a primary position.¹ In fact, this positioning had been so crucial and prevalent as to tempt Hellier in 1940 to comment that: 'no novel yet exists in Swahili which is the original work of the Native of the country' (Hellier *in* Ohly, 1981:5). No doubt, this was very telling of the state of affairs at the time. The scholar advanced that he believed that prose literature in Swahili at the time did not connote 'art, the exercise of the imagination, dramatic ability, descriptive power, skill in characterization' (*ibid*). Although this criticism might be unfair and debatable, nevertheless it reflects the status of translation at the time. It is worth noting that the only novels that were viewed as worthy of being labelled as such, were foreign translations. Most of these translations are no longer in circulation, as are a number of translations and prose literature that were undertaken immediately after independence. Only a handful of copies can be found in private libraries or some of the few established libraries in educational institutions.²

It should be remembered that historically, oral literature has been much more important in Tanzania and it is only at the onset of colonialism that written prose as

¹ This has been discussed in detail in Chapter two. For more see Even-Zohar, 1978:193.

² See chapter one.

we know it today, was introduced. The main aim of this literature was educational. The colonial state translated from its own stock what it saw as appropriate. This trend was then developed in the post-colonial period where the written form was adapted to the African context. In due course, the repertoire of Tanzanian oral forms expressed in songs and poems gained importance and existed side by side with modern genres of novels and dramas although its main aim remained what I would call the 'production of texts for educational purposes'.

Reflecting on this, the importance accorded to education during this epoch inevitably placed educational or academic literature at the centre of the Swahili literary polysystem. I firmly believe that, text-books produced for educational purposes take the centre stage of the current Swahili polysystem. Other individual systems such as Swahili poetry and the Swahili audio-visual systems are also located towards the centre although they are not as central as the text-books. Translation has been relegated to the periphery. In the translation system, I found that, the translations that have been included in the school syllabi are located at the centre of this system and those that are not part of the school system are positioned in the margins. This belief was not only reinforced by the fact that all the publishers that I interviewed informed me that their publishing houses did not produce translations as such, but also by a simple observation that I did at the Tanzania Publishing House. I found that copies of Sembene's Swahili translation of *The Money Order* (1972) as *Hawala ya Fedha* (1980), and Ba's translation of *So Long a Letter* (1981) as *Barua ndefu kama hii* (1994), sold very well. They actually flew off the shelves since they are part of the school syllabus. On the other hand, copies of Sembene's *Chale za Kikabila* (1981), which were self-commissioned by Cecil Magembe, have been gathering dust for years since they have not been included in the list of books that are part of the school syllabus. The texts that are part of the syllabus have a trail of analysis produced by

University lecturers targeting student's learning of these texts. I found a number of student's companions that facilitated the understanding of *Hawala ya Fedha* (1980) and *Barua ndefu kama hii* (1994). Interestingly, the analysis offered, which is therefore part of the educational corpus, is done through an understanding of the translation's form and content as opposed to a comparative analysis between their source texts and the Swahili translation. In short, the books are studied as Swahili literature books and their source texts are not included in the corpus. This shows that the relation between Swahili translations and other target texts is textual or natural and it also reinforces the idea that a good number of translations are actually regarded as part of Swahili literature.

The inclusion of translations into the Swahili literary system is actually a norm in the Tanzanian Swahili polysystem. Translations are regarded as Swahili literary texts first and foremost, and then as translations. The fact that they are translations is only secondary. This is most probably due to the fact that Tanzania's literary system is young and still depends on other literary systems for its development. It is in the process of establishing itself but hampered by many issues, including dependency on foreign markets for materials needed for book publishing, financial constraints of both producers and consumers, low literacy rates and not least of all, the poor protection of the rights of authors and translators. All these factors have somehow prompted the Swahili polysystem to include all that is in Swahili as part of its identity. We therefore have, Nyerere's *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969) as opposed to Shakespeare's *Mabepari wa Venisi* (1969). This is explained in Descriptive Translation Studies, where every literary system is understood to need a minimum of repertoire in order to maintain itself; if this is not possible then that system will strive 'to avail itself of a growing inventory of alternative options' (Even-

Zohar, 1990:26). One of the options is the inclusiveness that has been discussed above.

Another one is related to indirect translations where we find the Swahili polysystem has been historically dependent on foreign translations, especially from English. The fact that the source text is an intermediary text seems to be irrelevant. The foreignness is once again, only secondary. What is valued is the fact that the text is in Swahili and that its source text is English. English translations are used as source texts even if the original texts were readily available to the Swahili. Interestingly, this trend has been quite dominant and I believe that this is a norm in the Swahili polysystem. Swahili translators prefer to use English as source text. This has been done for translations ranging from classics such as *The Nights*, Naguib Mahfouz's *The Search* to African writer's series by authors such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o whose source language, Kikuyu, is easily accessible to the Swahili.³

Venuti (1992:6) argues that publishers in the UK and also in the US have tended to choose works that could be easily assimilated in their cultures while 'imposing Anglo-American values on a sizeable foreign readership' (Venuti, 1992:6). It seems that there is a link between the Anglo-American publishers and the Swahili publishers where, as a foreign readership, the Swahili have chosen English as a de-facto source language text. Interestingly, it is not the position of the original work that takes precedence, but rather, that of its English translation. This is crystallised in the following quote about indirect translations in the Hebrew polysystem:

A translation tended to be selected for translation... precisely as any other text would; namely, on the basis of its position in the *mediating* system, with no regard for the position of its own original in the source literature. Consequently, what was nominally second-hand translation, was functionally- that is, in terms of the structure of the target culture and the prospective position of that text within it – tantamount to first-hand translation (Toury, 1995:133)

³ See chapter six.

The above mentioned quote is very relevant in Swahili. For instance, in his 'Introduction' to *The Nights*, Joseph Campbell (1952) points out that, although the work is a classic in English literature, it has never been regarded as a work of any value in Arabic literature.⁴ Campbell (1952:1) talks of the tenth-century historian Ali Aboulhusn el Mesoudi, condemning the stories, saying 'I have seen the complete work more than once, and it is indeed a vulgar, insipid book.' The fact that the book is made up of folktales that openly deal with sexuality and the style of writing is not intricate, has meant that, in the medieval Arabic polysystem, the tales were regarded as lowbrow. Ironically, this age-old English classic has only found appreciation in the Arab world recently. But, just as it has been a classic in the English polysystem from the word go, it has also been a classic in the Swahili polysystem from its inception. Therefore, it seems that, in regards to indirect translations, choices are made, not based on the status of the source texts but rather, the status and position of the English translations.

A priori, with reference to Tanzania's nationalistic tendencies, I did not expect the above to be a norm, but it certainly is. Even modern translators such as Simba, have translated from an English translation. Therefore, as Tanzanian modern literature tries to develop its own repertoire of different genres, it seems that the empire still plays an important role in regards to the choices made by translators. This use of options from abroad makes the Tanzanian literary system far from being self-sufficient; it is rather dependent since it does not have enough options available within itself to keep a system optimum.⁵

In the same breath, Even-Zohar (1990, 2005) points out that, this kind of situation means that a literary system readily accepts interference from other systems. This would therefore explain the current interference of the Kenyan publishing

⁴ See chapter four.

⁵ See Even-Zohar (1990: 54-72).

system in Tanzania where, authors such as Shafi Adam Shafi amongst others have started to look towards Kenya for publishing and then having their works disseminated into Tanzania.

One of the initial interference in Tanzania arose soon after the British colonized Tanganyika. This was in the form of missionaries developing writing and then colonial rulers making English an official language. As a consequence, English, and hence British literature, became a source of interference as a result of dominance. This dominance is yet another reason for indirect translations from English to have become a norm.

Another form of interference is linked to funding. I found that the different systems in Tanzania, for instance the education system, similar to many systems in the developing world, rely heavily on funds from Western donors. This financial aid has only slightly overflowed and reached translations specifically those of children's literature. The majority of translations are undertaken through translator's personal initiatives. This means therefore that, it is not just the 'educated elite' so to speak who can allow themselves to be translators, but one has to be financially secure to undertake a non-commissioned work whose financial return is uncertain. Interestingly, it is the norm in the Swahili translation system for translators to commission themselves.

We find that it is largely during the colonial period that translations were commissioned by the government. It is quite probable that Brenn and Johnson received some kind of financial remuneration for their efforts. On the other hand, Nyerere, Simba, Adam and the majority of Swahili translators in Tanzania, self-commissioned themselves to translate and did not receive anything except probably some kind of royalty when the books were sold. Out of these translations, those that familiarized their contents to suit the Swahili milieu have had their work accepted

into the educational system, therefore placing them firmly in the centre of the translation system. A good example of this is *Hawala ya Fedha* (1980) which is a compulsory school reading.

This act of self-translation or self commissioning to translate, is explained by Bandia (2009:13), as a strategy that is ‘conceived in terms of a continuum and movement adopted by dominated writers to counter literary and cultural domination by the centre’. Translators use this strategy ‘to deal with the distance and decentring imposed upon them by hegemonic cultures’ (ibid). Swahili translators have gone a step further by translating foreign works into Swahili rather than vice-versa, thenceforth promoting and developing their national language and culture at home.

Findings from this study have shown that, during the post-colonial period, the translation context was largely a response to the claim by the West over cultural authority. Translators were extremely sensitive to the Swahili culture and language and were largely driven by the urge to overcome what they interpreted as a tumultuous period when all that was African was derogated. Thus, spearheaded by ideals of nationalism, they wanted to bring home what was foreign, appropriate it, make it theirs, and domesticate it. In this study, I have argued that they used two main strategies of translation which are: cultural substitution and functional equivalence. Cultural substitution is an act of replacing culture specific items with those that would give a similar impact in the target culture. A good example is that of the ‘river bank’ in *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) by ‘under a mango tree’. Both spaces give pleasure to those who use them. The European can relax by the bank, enjoying the elusive sun while the African can cool off under the mango tree’s shade, get away from the heat and sun. Functional equivalence is the paraphrasing or usage of culturally neutral terms as equivalents of culturally specific terms. An example of this

is the usage of general terms that denote birds and flowers for instance instead of the specific type of bird or flower.

Similarly, whereas in the West, equivalence was understood to mean ‘sameness’, in the Swahili polysystem, it has been largely taken to mean ‘similar’. The Swahili translations that this study has analysed have shown a certain kind of hierarchy of equivalence. This has ranged from similarity to sameness with the majority leaning towards an equivalence which is equivalent to similarity. Thus, although the level of equivalence employed by a translator is dependent on the aim and the context of the translation, the trend has moved towards what is similar meaning, what is familiar and, hence, the domestic.

However, some translators and specifically those of the 1970s who translated from African sources and modern translators like Simba, have interpreted equivalence to mean sameness. This has a direct link with norms since translations that have followed the ‘norm’ have been easily acceptable whereas those that have not followed the norm have remained inadequate. Nevertheless, due to the unstable nature of norms, translations that deviated from the norm have somehow stimulated a catalyst for change.

We have also seen that applicable today in Swahili translations is Toury’s (1995:57) statement that the ‘actual decisions (the results of which the researcher would confront) will necessarily involve some ad hoc combination of, or compromise between two extremes implied by the initial norm.’ Thus, translations are rarely completely adequate or completely acceptable. Therefore, ‘translation decisions are neither fully predetermined nor totally idiosyncratic’ (Hermans, 1999:74). We find that, although using various forms of the strategy of domestication has been the norm in Swahili translation, this choice is slightly balanced by the use of some foreignizing strategies.

Ohly (1981:75) recalls an observation by Mazrui that pointed out at the 'presence of dualism in East African English literature implicit in the contradictions both indigenous and foreign, e.g. Western artistic influences versus older norms of creativity and modernity versus tradition.' In Swahili translation, dualism has taken the form of foreignizing and domesticating strategies. Domestication which is the most prevalent norm in regards to translation strategies, has been criticized for giving their readers 'a narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in another....subsequently this leads to works that are aggressively monolingual, unreceptive of the foreign and accustomed to fluent translations that invisibly inscribe foreign texts' (Venuti, 1995:6).⁶ At its extreme form, domesticated texts deny or do not recognize their foreign origin. These criticisms need to be taken into consideration by future Swahili translators.

Domestication has also come in the form of adaptation. The foreign is familiarized and adapted so it replaces the cultural and sometimes social or language-based realities in the source text, with a corresponding reality in the Swahili text. Adaptation has a long history in Swahili translations. It was employed in the translation of the oldest surviving pre-colonial piece of writing, the *Hamziyya*. To this effect, the translator, Sayyid Aidarus bin Athman Al Sheikh Ali, should be acknowledged as the initiator of this norm in the Swahili polysystem. The significance of his stance is seen through the floodgate of adapted prose translations that continued in the colonial period and then through to the current time, most probably moving beyond the given translator's expectations. His translation explicitly applied the strategy of adaptation by transcribing the work. In fact, during the colonial era, most of the translations were made by translators whose ideals of equivalence were far from faithfulness. These Swahili translations did not strive for a

⁶ These criticisms are explicitly discussed by Tymoczko (1999).

strict conventional or pre-conceived notion of equivalence whose traditional rhetoric demanded faithful renderings of the source text. It seems that the trend was to have translations that were actually interpretations intended to bring the content across in a clear and pleasing order.

Adaptation has been used to facilitate the ‘educating’ and ‘familiarizing’ of the Swahili with the culture and civilization of the great ‘Empire’. The result was, among others, the adaptation of Shakespeare’s work undertaken in the 1860s by an anonymous translator who ‘attempted to breathe Swahili life and culture into the translation, resulting in an independent interpretation of Shakespeare’ (Mazrui, 2007:133), and the ideologically loaded Shakespeare’s translation by Nyerere. Interestingly, this trend remained the norm for decades after Tanzania’s independence where we find that in the post-colonial period, translations tended to strive for familiarity. This was not very difficult as the African literature in foreign languages as written by authors such as Ngugi and Achebe, presented a world that was not alien to that of the Swahili. The themes during this period have been shown to include concepts of nationalism, pride in being considered the ‘other’, as equal to the colonizer.

In the Swahili polysystem, I would argue that, despite the fact that Swahili translations have hardly ever fully adhered to the Western hegemonic traditional interpretation of what constitutes a translation, they are accepted and interpreted as translations by the Swahili. Therefore, the statement about Descriptive Translation Studies that, ‘anything is included as a literary translation that is regarded as such by a certain cultural community at a certain time’ (Hermans, 1985:13) holds up. Parallel to this, we also find that, the main focus of Swahili translators is determined by whether the translation would be familiar or foreign. Therefore translators have had to consider the relationship between their product and the Swahili literature, conscious

of the fact that the adapted product has significance far beyond the immediate translated work.

An important factor towards the dissemination and use of norms of translation in Tanzania is publishing. It appears that monopoly policies that affected demand and supply of books during *Ujamaa* had a direct effect on publishing. Walter Bgoya⁷ confirms this that the monopoly of production and distribution of books had been given to parastatal organisations. The result is that, although the market was pre-determined, nevertheless, there was under provision of educational materials. This means that their value soared and a number of schools struggled with only a few books. Now that there is a free market economy, it is still the case that publishers supply for a predicted market, which is largely academic since it is made up of students, the middle class and institutions. People's buying power often exceeds output. There is still a small fear that educational books will run out, therefore, those who can afford normally buy as much as they can. There is of course a small scale demand for non-educational materials but its market is quite niche.

It is evident that it is almost impossible to find translated literature that had been undertaken during the colonial period in any of the local bookshops. This was also confirmed by a number of students that I interviewed. They pointed out that apart from Nyerere's work and a handful compulsory books that form part of their school syllabi, it is almost impossible to find old translated literature in local bookshops. Most bookshops exclusively sell the translated literature that is part of the school syllabi. The book shop owners reiterated the concerns of the publishers, that there is no reading culture in Tanzania, thus stocking translations that are not part of the Tanzanian school system is not profitable. Publishers interviewed for this research have argued that the financial state of affairs does not allow them to commission

⁷ Interviewed in Dar es Salaam, 7th November 2006.

translation works. This would involve the cost of translating, translation rights and rights to the author as well as their own expenses as publishers. It is precisely for this reason that some translators, including most of the translators presented in this study, have commissioned their own translations.⁸ This recalls Lefevere's argument that, literary systems are controlled by professionals such as critics and academicians within the system, patronage which includes publishers, and also the dominant poetics which include the preferred genres and leitmotifs. These are the 'institutions' that are in power and in the case of Swahili they are in turn, controlled by the institutions that fund them above all else.

Interestingly during the course of data collection it became obvious to me that only a handful of students⁹ majoring in Swahili language and literature had ever heard of the numerous translations undertaken during the colonial period.¹⁰ This loss of historical and institutional memory is a cause for concern as it has direct impact on the future of Swahili translation. The fact that future language specialists are unaware of what preceded their current corpus is not only a reflection of Tanzania's educational standards but also the current marginal status of translation. This was confirmed by various Swahili readers as well as students majoring in Swahili. Students for example were familiar with *Alfu lela Ulela* since they are still in circulation but they were not aware of *Elisi katika nchi ya ajabu* (1940). Similarly, they were familiar with the tales of *Abunuwas* as these circulated in both oral and written forms but had never heard of Hodja, or the fact that *Abunuwas* is actually a character in the English *Arabian Nights*.

The connection between the poet in *The Nights*, Abu Nuwas al-Hasan ibn Hani al-Hakami, the Swahili trickster, Abunuwas and Mullah Hodja from the Turkish or Ottoman tradition has never been discussed in any previous Swahili study. All the

⁸ See chapter two.

⁹ Interviewed at Zanaki High School, Dar es Salaam, 6th November 2006.

¹⁰ See chapter five.

students, translators and respondents that I interviewed had never heard of this prior to my interviewing them. This fact reinforced my argument that Abunuwas' status as a pseudo-translation is actually presented for the very first time in this study.¹¹ This marks an important landmark in Swahili literature and translation.

Another important factor towards the dissemination of translation works and published materials is Tanzania's reading culture. The near total decline of a reading culture since the independence is a sad reflection of what seems to have been the state of affairs since the 1960s. After Independence, Nyerere advanced with the Five Year Development Plan for 1964 to 1969 that focussed on the stance for Adult education. Nyerere believed that children would not have any impact on the country's development for the next ten to twenty years. A year after Nyerere's tackling of the adults' attitude towards education, in 1965, while in Nairobi, Whiteley (1967) pointed out:

Reading for pleasure is a habit not easily acquired nor widely practised where no tradition exists, where reading is associated with educational courses for specific ends, and where per capita income is extremely low. But we cannot expect writers to emerge if they cannot be sure of selling their work in sufficient quantities for them to make some profit (Whiteley, (1967) cited in Whiteley, 1969:125).

By the late 1980's Education for Self Reliance was in tatters and it seems that Whiteley's (1967) observation about reading in order to pass the exams still holds today. At present, the lack of a reading culture has worsened not only because of the difficulty in acquiring a reading habit, but also as a direct result of the economic constraints. It appears that whatever is read is of absolute necessity. Even the elite that are expected to read for pleasure would rather immerse themselves in the audio-visual world or listen to whatever has been written or summarized from an audio

¹¹ See chapter four.

source rather than ‘wasting’ their time with pleasure reading.¹² This problem is also a reflection of the country’s level of literacy.¹³ At this point, I would like to point out that, the efforts by the state and publishers in general with regards to alleviating illiteracy have been commendable although it is also necessary to undertake surveys on reading habits and interests so that hopefully, some kind of a reading culture is established, or better ways of engaging the modern reader would be found.

Similar to many descriptive and systemic studies, this research is self-contained as well as a departure for further research. James Holmes¹⁴ advanced that, ‘one of the eventual goals of product-oriented DTS might possibly be a general history of translation – however ambitious such a goal may sound at this time’ (Holmes, 2000:177). He also argued for the development of socio-translation studies and even psycho-translation studies which would be the result of function oriented and process-oriented DTS respectively. At this point in time, we are aware that various languages, for instance Hebrew, have sought such studies, it is my hope that the same would happen for Swahili. Similar studies to the current one can be conducted for other Swahili translations and also explanations¹⁵ can be carried out. Along similar lines, such studies would probably discern laws of Swahili translations along similar lines to Toury’s (1995) translation laws.¹⁶ At this point, the presentation of Swahili laws of translation may seem an ambitious feat due to the laws’ general nature and universality. However, if various descriptive research studies will be carried out and should they target the various Tanzanian Swahili translations, Swahili laws of translation would certainly be within reach. This will be important in the development of the Swahili polysystem.

As a final point, I believe that, Tanzania has come a long way from the time when the state had monopoly of the book industry. Nevertheless, it is imperative that

¹² From my interview with Professor Mulokozi, University of Dar es Salaam, 1st July 2004

¹³ See chapter three (Methodology) where the decline in literacy rate is discussed.

¹⁴ See chapter two.

¹⁵ As advocated by Chesterman (2008).

¹⁶ See chapter two.

the country establishes a policy that would incorporate all elements of the book publishing industry which would not simply target books needed for educational programmes but for all books in general and translation works in particular. Relevant government agencies and publishing houses should spear head the production of translations and although translation will most probably never again enjoy the central position that it had a number of decades ago; there should be a considerable output of translations. In turn, these should acknowledge their status as translations and employ balanced strategies of translations in terms of their production.

APPENDIX 1

Tabular Presentation of Discussed Swahili Prose Translations

Below is a list of the main translations that have been discussed in this study.

	SOURCE TEXT TITLE	SWAHILI TRANSLATION TITLE
1	<i>A Thousand Nights and a Night</i> (1885-1886), Vol 1-10, translated by Richard Burton	<i>Mazungumzo ya Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Elfu na Moja</i> (1929), Vol 1-4, translated by Brenn, edited by Johnson. <i>Alfu-Lela-Ulela, au Siku Elfu na Moja</i> (1973 – 1974), Revised Editions, translated by Brenn, edited by Yahya and Saidi. <i>Mazungumzo Kamilifu ya Alfu Lela ulela au siku elfu moja na Moja</i> (2004 – 2006), Vol 1-3, translated by Hassan Adam.
2	<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> (1865), by Lewis Carroll.	<i>Elisi katika Nchi ya Ajabu</i> (1940), by Ermytrude Virginia St Lo Malet.
3	<i>Hamziyya</i> (2005), transcription and translation of Aidarus' adaptation from Imam Al Busiri's Arabic original by Wa Mutiso. ¹	<i>Hamziyya</i> (2005), Swahili translation by Wa Mutiso.
4	<i>King Solomon Mines</i> (1889) by Ryder Haggard.	<i>Mashimo ya Mfalme Suleimani</i> (1929), translated by Frederick Johnson.
5	<i>Song of Lawino</i> (1966) by P'Bitek	<i>Wimbo wa Lawino</i> (1975), translated by Paul Sozigwa.
6	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i> (1616) by Shakespeare	<i>Mapebari wa Venisi</i> (1969), by Nyerere.
7	<i>Oedipus the King</i> (1822) by Sophocles	<i>Mfalme Edipode</i> (1971) translated by Mushi.
8	<i>The Search</i> (1991) translated by Mohamed Islam and edited by Magdi Wahba.	<i>Msako</i> (2004) translated by Simba
9	<i>So Long a letter</i> (1981) by Mariama Ba.	<i>Barua ndefu kama hii</i> (1980) translated by

		Maganga
10	<i>The money order</i> (1972) translated from French by Clive Wake and John O. Reed	<i>Hawala ya fedha</i> (1980) adapted by Amandina Lihamba.
11	Source Text Unknown (pseudotranslation)	<i>Hekaya za Abunuwas</i> (1935)
12	<i>Julius Caesar</i> (1967) by Shakespeare.	<i>Juliasi Kaizari</i> (1969) translated by Julius Nyerere.
13	<i>The Tempest</i> (2004) by Shakespeare.	<i>Tufani</i> (1969) translated by Mushi
14	<i>Treasure Island</i> (1993) by Stevenson, R.L.	<i>Kisiwa cha hazina</i> (1943) translated by F. Johnson. and E. Brenn.
15	<i>Cinderella</i> (1999) by Charles Perrault and Loek Koopmans	<i>Sinderella</i> (2003) adapted by R.L Mushi
16	<i>The Frog Prince</i> (1989) by Brothers Grimm	<i>Binti Mfalme na Chura</i> (2003) adapted by
17	<i>Upendo's Dream</i> (2004) by Elieshi Lema	<i>Ndoto ya Upendo</i> (2004) translated by E. Wema

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PUBLISHERS

Towards discerning Norms of Swahili Translation.

Interview Questions (Publishers)

1. Personal History

- Name
- Place of birth
- Languages
Mother tongue:

Other Languages:
- Level of education and schooling?
- Do you translate? What languages do you translate in/from?
- Are you a professional translator? If yes, what is your level of competence?

2. Literature/Experience

- Which authors have impressed you? (in any language)
- What are the best books you have read?
- What Swahili translated books have you read?
- Can you quote anything that you read in a translation?

- Who is your favourite translator?
- Why?
- Have you written anything yourself?
- If yes, what was the subject?
- Has it been translated?

3. Publishing

- When was your publishing house established?
- Who is the owner?
- What is your motto?
- What kind of work do you publish?
- Do you publish translations?
- If yes, what have you published?
- Do you choose what is to be translated?
- What do you base your choice on?
- What type of translation do you prefer?
- Do you have a set of in-house norms that need to be adhered to by translators?
- If yes/ No, why?
- Do you have preferred translation techniques?
- Do you have in house translators?
- Is it more expensive to publish translated work?
- Is there demand for translated work?

- Do translators adhere to your in house norms, if you have any?
- What is your relationship with translators?
- What role does the government/ authorities play vis-à-vis translation?
- What is the role of the audience in all this?
- How would you rank translations? (Status)
- What languages do you publish in/ from?
- Please tell me about your economic / financial situation
- Please tell me about your copyright policies
- What do you think is the future of Swahili translations?
- Anything else?

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS / ELDERS/ EDUCATION RELATED

Towards discerning Norms of Swahili Translation.

Questionnaire (Students / Education related)

1. Personal History

- Name
- Place of birth
- Languages
Mother tongue

Other Languages
- Level of education and schooling
- Do you translate? what languages do you translate in/from?
- Are you a professional translator? If yes, what is your level of competence?

2. Literature/Experience

- Which authors have impressed you? (in any language). Would you translate them into Swahili?
- What are the best books you have read?
- What Swahili translated books have you read?
- Can you quote anything that you read in a translation?
- Who is your favourite translator?
- Why?

- Can you name about five titles that were translated during the colonial era?.....
- Can you name about five titles that were translated after Independence?.....
- Can you name about three titles that were translated recently?.....
- What made you remember the translations that you have just named?
- Have you written anything yourself?
- If yes, what was the subject?
- Has it been translated?
- Do you translate regularly?
- What have you translated?
- What are your reasons for translating?
- What strategies do you use?
- What problems do you regularly encounter?
- Do you prefer to familiarise the foreign or do you translate word for word
- Why?
- Do you adhere to any principles while translating?
- What has been the most prominent or common trend in Swahili translations that you have encountered?
- Why do you think that is the case?
- What is the role of publishers, the audience and institutions in regards to Swahili translation?
- Can you think of any translations that you have recently come across in these fields?

Academic,

Entertainment

Newspaper

Novels (what kind, authors, themes)

Poetry

Children's stories

- What do people think and expect of translations?
- How would you translate the following:
 - a.) The Merchant of Venice
 - b.) His father must have enjoyed such surroundings when he made love to his mother
 - c.) A sardine sandwich
 - d.) Oedipus complex
 - e.) going on a wild-geese chase
- What do you think is the future of Swahili translations

Thank you

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